



THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION
DEVOTED TO BORDER HISTORY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 34.

Price, Five Cents.



LIKE AN APPARITION A STRANGER STOOD BEFORE THE EYES OF THE SURPRISED OFFICERS — (CHAPTER CLVI.)



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BUFFALO BILL'S VICTORIES.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

CHAPTER CLVI.

THE STRANGE GUIDE.

A company of United States Cavalry was encamped in the midst of a wild, mountainous country of the Southwest at a time when civilization was almost unknown in that wild land, then peopled by savage tribes and raided by outlaws from across the Rio Grande.

But for the protecting arm of the United States army the few pioneers settling there would have been robbed and driven away, or massacred, while there was a bond of interest, if not of sympathy, between the hostile Indians and the outlaws that caused them to make war upon the soldier and settler alike.

Acting under orders to hunt down a band of Mexican outlaws who had lately crossed the Rio Grande, and were raiding the ranches of American citizens, the troopers had followed their trail and driven them into a hiding-place in the mountain country, when as night came on, worn out with their hard riding for several days, they had encamped early in the evening, their horses being almost completely dead beat.

The command consisted of the captain, two lieu-

tenants, a surgeon, and sixty men, all well mounted, armed and equipped, yet a small force to venture so far into the country of the fierce Comanches.

They all knew their danger, yet were glad to press on, believing that before long they must overtake the Mexican bandits they were pursuing, and whose trail showed that they were some thirty in number, not over a day's ride ahead of them, and traveling very slow, the latter fact proving that their horses were more nearly broken down than were those of the troopers.

Having selected his camp for the night, Captain Vernon Field, a handsome officer, young in years for the rank he held, at once threw his scouts out to guard the approaches to the encampment, and placed a line of sentinels also as an extra guard, realizing the danger of a sudden attack by Comanches, which, though none had yet been seen, might then be uncomfortably near them.

An early supper was disposed of, and the men turned in for a long rest, all except the scouts, sentinels and Captain Fields himself, for he had insisted upon dividing the watches with his lieutenants.

Seated by the fire, which was built in a canyon, smoking his pipe and chatting with Surgeon Sprague, Captain Field suddenly arose to his feet as he saw a stranger appear before him like an apparition, coming from he knew not where.

The stranger was a tall man, broad-shouldered, splendidly formed and dressed in a buckskin suit; the leggins being stuck in the tops of his boots.

Upon his head was a Mexican sombrero richly embroidered in silver, and about his waist, half hiding his belt of arms, was a silk sash.

His face was as dark as a Mexican's, his hair brown, and worn long, and a long silken mustache, the ends curled upward, gave him a dashing appearance.

A serape of gay colors hung from his shoulders in the graceful manner that the Mexicans wear them, and altogether he was a most striking, handsome, strange-looking person. Though Captain Field did not realize it then, the stranger somehow bore a singularly striking resemblance to Buffalo Bill, the famous army scout.

Raising his sombrero courteously, before Captain Field or Surgeon Sprague could utter a word, he said in a low voice:

"May I ask if you, sir, are the commander of this troop?"

"I am, sir—Vernon Field, captain United States Army, at your service," was the prompt reply.

"You have a force, sir, only of three officers, five scouts and sixty soldiers?"

"You have counted them all, sir, so must know that they double your force of thirty men."

"I do not understand you, Captain Field?"

"Are you not the leader of the Mexican outlaws, come to make terms with me, now I have driven you up into the Comanche country?"

The stranger smiled, but answered:

"No, sir, I am not a bandit; but permit me to introduce myself as a Texan ranchero."

"A ranchero up in this country?"

"No, my ranch is far from here; but hearing that a party of soldiers had come here in pursuit of Mexican outlaws, I came on to serve them as a guide, for I know this country well, and, in fact, wished to extricate you from the danger into which the bandits have led you."

"How do you mean?"

"I mean that the outlaws are friendly with the

Comanches—in fact, the guides are Comanche Indians, and they have led you into a trap."

"Then you are not one of those Mexican outlaws?"

The words were uttered partly as an assertion, partly as a question, and might or might not be taken offensively.

"No, sir, I am not a Mexican outlaw."

"How do you know that the Mexicans and Comanches are allies?"

"I have known it for months, sir, for once I was a captive of the Comanches, and also I have been a prisoner in the hands of the outlaws, so I know both well."

"Do you know where these Mexicans are now encamped?"

"I do, sir."

"Are there any Comanches near?"

"There are 500 Comanches now surrounding your camp, sir."

"Ah! you know this?"

"I have been watching them for the past two hours."

"May I ask if they have seen the Mexicans?"

"They have, sir, and they attack you with their combined force at dawn."

"How did you pass my sentinels and enter my camp?"

"I came by a way where no sentinels were stationed, sir."

"And what was your real motive in coming to my camp?"

"I have told you, sir, that it was to save you and your command from death—to act as your guide."

"An unknown guide?" and Captain Field spoke in a tone of sarcasm.

The face of the stranger flushed at the words of Captain Field, but he replied, quietly:

"Yes, sir, an unknown guide, yet I have no proof but my word that I wish to serve you, and I tell you frankly, that the outlaws led you into a trap, for this is what is called a blind valley, that is, having no exit save where you came in.

"With the narrow entrance blocked by an ambush, and the Indians firing down upon you from the cliffs, there will be no hope for you whatever."

"Not according to your way of putting it, sir, and I tell you frankly that I wish to believe you are honest; but if there is no exit to this valley how did you enter it?"

"I came here, sir, with the aid of my lasso, for I lowered myself from yonder cliff, where my lariat still hangs."

"Ah! that is the way you dodged my scouts and sentinels?"

"My dear sir, your scouts do not know this country, surely, for the places where they stand are not canyons, simply chasms that have no outlet, and the danger of an attack upon you need only be looked for from the way you came in, or from the tops of the cliffs, so you can realize how completely you are hemmed in."

"It would seem so from your description. What do you say, Sprague?"

The surgeon's reply came bluntly:

"If this man is a villain, his face belies him."

"Wake up Cole and Lane, please, and ask them to come here."

The surgeon went off to obey, and in a few minutes returned accompanied by the two lieutenants, who regarded the stranger with surprise.

In a few words Captain Field explained the situation to them, and asked their opinion.

"The man is one of the Mexican band, captain, and is here as a spy. I would not trust him on oath," was Lieutenant Cole's quick reply.

"On the contrary, I believe he is what he says he is," was Lieutenant Lane's response.

The stranger showed no emotion at hearing either of the rejoinders, nor even looked at Surgeon Sprague, who added:

"You are right, Lane, I would trust him."

"I do not say trust me, Captain Field, so do as you please, for I know what the result will be to you and your men."

"But I would suggest that you order your scouts to push on from their positions, and return and report the result, for it will take them but a short while to discover that this valley has not an exit through any of these canyons, only by way of the one that you came in."

"Lieutenant Cole, order the scout to advance and report the result to me without delay."

The officer walked off to obey the order, and turning again to the stranger, Captain Field said:

"If we are entrapped, sir, and the trails guarded, may I ask how you expect to guide us to safety?"

"The way I came into the valley, sir, over the cliffs."

"You mean that we must climb the lasso to the cliff above?"

"Yes, sir."

"What could we do on foot in this country surrounded by hostiles?"

"Your horses, sir, are worked down, as you know, and would be of no use in a flight; but with the fresh ones of the Indians you could not only escape, but by running off their ponies leave them afoot, for they could not recover fresh ones under twenty-four hours."

"Your suggestion is a good one; but where are these Indian ponies?"

"As the Comanches could not ride in surrounding your camp, they went on foot, leaving their ponies in the valley several miles from here."

"And guarded?"

"There are about a dozen young bucks guarding them."

"And you could guide us to their horses?"

"I could, sir, along a ridge I know is not guarded, for it begins at the cliff yonder where my lasso hangs."

"Following the ridge, it will lead us to a cliff, which we must also descend by means of a lasso, and then we are in the valley where the ponies are, and the braves who are encircling you are miles away."

"My idea is to climb the lariat with a number of others, which can be made fast to the pines there and lowered, thus enabling the men to make quick work of it, and also draw up their saddles, bridles and camp equipages."

"We can carry them along the ridge and lower them into the valley, where the ponies are."

"Your plan is certainly a good one, and you inspire me with confidence, in spite of appearances being against you."

"But we must lose our Mexicans, and the expedition prove a useless one."

"I am not so sure of that, Captain Field, for the outlaws must retreat from here by one of the two passes, and when you have made the Comanches believe that you, glad to get away, have returned to the fort, you can divide your force in two commands and ambush each pass, for I will guide you to them, and you may be sure that the Mexicans will return across the Rio Grande as sure as they believe they

can do so, for they would not have come up here had you not pressed them so closely."

"I am glad to hear that, at least; but here come the scouts."

The scouts came in with Lieutenant Cole, and they were seen to be a hardy, brave set of men, though they had gotten beyond their knowledge of the country where they were wont to do scouting duty.

To the questions of Captain Field each one returned the same answer, save the man who guarded the canyon the troopers had entered the valley by, and he reported that there were Indians assembled on their trail.

The others reported that there was no exit from the canyons, the entrance to which they were guarding.

"I will take the risk, sir, and allow you to be our guide," said Captain Field, suddenly.

CHAPTER CLVII.

UNDER THE THREAT OF DEATH.

The firelight showed a smile flit over the face of the stranger, as Captain Field said that he would take the risk, and Lieutenant Cole said quickly:

"I would not trust him, Captain Field, for he is, I feel assured, an outlaw."

Unheeding the lieutenant's words, the stranger remarked:

"I thank you, sir, for your confidence in me, for I admit that you have nothing but my word to cause you to trust me.

"It is now nine o'clock, sir, and if you will allow one of your men to climb the lariat and make the others fast, for the rest of the men can be getting ready for the march."

"I tell you, captain, we will be led into a trap by this man," urged Lieutenant Cole, excitedly.

"Either get us out of it, Mr. Cole, or allow me to do as I deem best unquestioned," curtly replied Captain Field, and the lieutenant walked off muttering something about his hanging the man if he was in command.

"Go up the lariat yourself, sir, and carry the others," said Captain Field, when they reached the cliff where the lasso of the stranger hung over the cliff.

With a bow at the confidence shown him, the stranger seized the lasso and went up hand over hand

in a way that showed he possessed great strength and endurance.

He had hung about his neck a dozen lassoes, and soon after his form, dimly seen against the sky, had disappeared over the cliff, the ends of those he carried began to drop in a row.

The men had quickly awakened, and ordered to pack up their traps to carry, as the horses were to be left behind.

They obeyed in silence, wondering what such orders meant, and soon appeared at the bottom of the cliff carrying their saddles, bridles, and outfits.

Others had gone up the lassoes to where the stranger awaited them, and they were soon drawing up the saddles, bridles, blankets and provisions.

It was the work of nearly two hours, but at last it was accomplished, and then the strange guide said:

"I am ready to lead the way now, sir."

"One minute, Captain Field?"

"Well, Cole."

"If I seem to interfere, sir, it is for the interest of us all, and, as you are following the guidance of a man whom I suspect to be one of the outlaws, for he certainly looks it, may I suggest that he guide us at the revolver's muzzle?"

"How do you mean, Mr. Cole?"

"I mean that a man shall walk behind him with a cocked revolver, and if we are led into a trap, let him be the first one to die."

Captain Field bit his lips and seemed about to make a sharp reply when the stranger said:

"Do as the lieutenant requests, Captain Field, for perhaps the men would feel more secure."

"As you suggest it, sir, I will myself keep by your side and it is useless to say that should you be treacherous, which I do not believe of you, it will be your death-knell the moment I have reason to doubt you?"

The guide bowed in silence, and, Captain Field stepping to his side, he led the way through the darkness along the ridge.

It was an hour's march, laden as the men were, to the point where the guide halted and said they must descend into a valley.

All was dark there, but the sound of horses moving about and cropping grass could be heard, and Captain Field asked:

"What is the height here?"

"Thirty feet, sir, and the lassoes could be made fast to these trees."

"Where are the Indian guards?"

"Do you see that break in the range, sir, relieved against the sky?"

"Yes."

"That is the pass into the valley, and half of the guards are there, the others being over a mile away where there is a pass out of the valley."

"All right; I will descend first with you."

The lassoes having had one end made fast to the stunted pines growing on the edge of the cliff, the captain and the strange guide swung themselves over and descended into the valley.

Then the scouts followed, and were ordered to reconnoitre while the men and the traps were being lowered. One lasso was left in place as the last man came down, and just then the scouts came back reporting that there must be hundreds of ponies in the valley as they were scattered about, some staked out and others running loose.

The staked animals were quickly brought up and bridled and saddled, while others had the packs strapped on them.

Then the guide said:

"We can get upon the Indian guard, sir, by advancing on foot with the ponies, as though they were grazing near.

"To make a perfect success of it I would advise that no shot be fired, but that picked men rush in on the Indians and silently kill or capture them, and I will be glad to lead the party to make the attack."

"Give me your hand, guide, for I have perfect confidence in you, and you are no longer at the muzzle of a revolver in what you do," said Captain Field, frankly extending his hand to the stranger.

It had been with sad hearts that the soldiers had left their horses behind them, for they were splendid animals and were like comrades to them.

Only the fact that they could not go further without several days' rest, and could not be carried away with them the way the retreat had to be made, reconciled them in leaving them.

There were as many of the men who doubted the strange guide, as those who trusted him, so that Lieutenant Cole had a large following in that respect; but when they found the Indian ponies and were again mounted, with some 400 ponies to drive off with them, along with the traps and equipments

of the Comanches left with their horses, Lieutenant Cole was about the only one, with perhaps two or three exceptions, who still had a belief that the stranger would prove treacherous.

When Captain Field said what he did, and offered his hand to the guide, the lieutenant had hastened to remark:

"I still believe, Captain Field, that you are making a sad mistake."

"If I am, Lieutenant Cole, as commander of this expedition, I will be the most to suffer if there is a mistake made, while if I fall, Lieutenant Lane, who ranks you, will be in command, thus relieving you again from responsibility."

This cutting reply silenced Lieutenant Cole effectively, and Captain Field, picking out a dozen soldiers, along with the scouts, said:

"Now, guide, we will follow your lead to capture that Indian guard, and remember, men, no shot must be fired unless to save life.

"Lieutenant Lane, follow with the rest of the force, save those who are surrounding the herd of ponies to drive after us."

With this the strange guide led the way in the darkness, setting the example by not riding, but leading his horse, a spotted pony bearing the saddle and bridle of a chief.

As they came in closer under the shadows of the lofty range the darkness deepened, but a glow ahead showed where a campfire was flickering, and the guide whispered:

"That is the pass, sir, and we can get close upon them without being suspected."

Shielded by their ponies, the men drew nearer and nearer to where the Comanches were lying to guard the pass out of the valley.

If it was as the strange guide had said, there were not over half-a-dozen Indians there, all, except one, being doubtless asleep.

"The one on guard stands yonder, under the cliff, and I will try a ruse to get close to him," said the guide, and he took from the outfit on the pony he had appropriated the fantastic red bonnet of a chief and placed it upon his head.

Then, mounting, he rode on alone, leaving the captain and his men to still advance behind their ponies.

They saw him disappear under the shadow of the

cliff, but did not see that an Indian guard stepped out in front of him, believing him to be a chief.

It was the guard's last act, for with a sudden bend of the body the guide grasped him by the throat, and quick as a flash a revolver fell upon his head with a crashing blow.

Releasing his grip upon the Indian's throat the form fell limp and unconscious to the ground, and the guide rode at once toward the glow of the fire visible among the rocks.

He motioned to Captain Field to come on with his men, and leaving two soldiers to hold the horses, the others came quickly forward.

"Did you find a guard there?" whispered the captain.

"Yes, he is off duty forever," was the low response, and the guide casting his war bonnet across his saddle led the way to the camp among the rocks.

A few paces had they gone when they beheld a small fire, and around it lay half-a-dozen blanket-enveloped forms, all apparently fast asleep.

The guide, Captain Field, and the scouts moved ahead, the soldiers following, and with a bound they threw themselves upon the sleeping Indians, clutching at their throats to stifle an outcry, and endeavoring to use their knives.

The struggle was short, fierce, and only the hard breathing of the combatants broke the silence; but the soldiers hastened up and aided in mastering the half-dozen redskins, who were quickly silenced forever, for an escape, or a wacry might ruin all, so no mercy could be shown them.

There was a halt made there for the rest of the command to come up, and the ponies to be formed for a drive, the guide standing apart and waiting for all to be in readiness to start.

That he could now be trusted not a soul doubted, unless it was Lieutenant Cole, who was still blinded by his prejudice against him.

But Captain Field now believed thoroughly in his strange guide, and when the troopers came up with the herd, he rode ahead with him, the stranger seeming to know the country perfectly in the darkness.

Thus was the retreat of the troopers begun, the long line winding, like a serpent, among the canyons and valleys of the mountains and leaving the Comanches surrounding their camp, deserted by all save the horses.

CHAPTER CLVIII.

A LAME APOLOGY.

When the day dawned the troopers, with their large herd of ponies, were fifteen miles away from the camp in the canyon which had so nearly proved fatal to them.

The strange guide was still leading, with Captain Field by his side, and as the daylight brightened over the range he said:

"A mile ahead is a valley where we can halt for breakfast, for there is good grass there and plenty of water.

"About the time we reach the camping-place the Comanches will be attacking your camp, so that we will rest an hour and still have a long start of them, while you know they will have only the Mexican outlaws' horses and those you left behind to pursue you with, and these ponies are fresh."

"Yes, I feel no anxiety whatever, now, for you have saved my command from massacre, that is certain; but I regret having to go back, even with our large capture of Indian ponies, without those Mexican outlaws."

"I do not think you will have to return without them—in fact, as I told you, there are but two trails back to the Rio Grande, and one of them they will take, so we can ambush them on both and capture the entire party."

"You think the Indians will not accompany them?"

"No more than a few as guides, I think."

"We are strong enough to fight a large force, though if the outlaws had an escort it would be harder to capture them."

"Granted, sir; but I do not believe that they will have an Indian guard, as they will believe you were satisfied with getting away and making a capture of their ponies, so will not further molest the Mexicans."

"Well, I rely upon your opinion thoroughly, and I cannot tell you how much I owe to you for extricating us from the trap into which we had hastened."

"Do not speak of it, sir, for I acted only from a sense of duty in saving you from what I felt would end in a massacre when I saw you pass on into the mountains on the trail of the outlaws."

"You saw us pass, then?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where were you?"

"A day's ride from here, sir, hunting."

"And you have a ranch in this dangerous land, you said?"

"My ranch is some twenty miles from the trail you followed, sir, and from where I saw you."

"You certainly take big chances, for no other ranch is near you."

"It is a big risk, sir, and now and then I am the sufferer; but I like the wild life and its dangers, so dwell there with the half-dozen cowboys I keep on my ranch."

Captain Field gazed into the face of the guide, for it was sunrise now, and he saw it distinctly, and he had been an object of interest to the soldiers and scouts who also wished to have a good look at him by daylight.

He saw a face that was strikingly handsome and expressive, while in the large black eyes, fringed by the longest of lashes, there was a fascination that all must feel when he looked upon them.

He certainly was a man far beyond the average, and what had driven such a man to dwell in a wilderness, amid the deadliest dangers, no one could fathom.

They had now reached the valley where there was to be a halt made for breakfast, and as the men filed by where Captain Field stood with the guide, the men followed the example of Lieutenant Lane and saluted the guide as well as their commander.

The large herd of ponies, and a splendid lot they were, at once began to crop the juicy grass, while, having placed a guard around them, the men dismounted and began to prepare breakfast, forgetting their fatigue in their joy at their escape, and all enthusiastic in their praise of the strange guide.

Lieutenant Lane at once rode up to the guide, and throwing himself from the saddle said:

"Allow me to thank you, sir, for your rescue of us and most masterly retreat."

The guide grasped his hand warmly and replied:

"I am equally as glad to have served you, lieutenant, as you were to escape."

Lieutenant Cole had also drawn near, but as he said nothing to the guide, Captain Field remarked:

"Mr. Cole, do you not deem an apology due to our good friend there, as he has proven that your fears of treachery were without the slightest foundation?"

"I do owe him an apology, Captain Field, and will make it."

"But we took big chances in trusting a stranger,

and one who looks like a Mexican, as you must admit."

"We would have taken greater chances not to have followed his lead; but I felt sure that you would make an apology when you saw that you had wronged him."

"No one is more willing to do so, sir," and stepping up to the guide, Lieutenant Cole said:

"Guide, I wronged you, I find, in suspecting you of treachery, and I hope you will forget it. But you look like a Mexican, and, in fact, have, I detect, just the slightest accent in your English, so seeing you come into our camp, it was but natural I should mistake you for an outlaw."

"Now, I guess, we can trust you."

Captain Field's looks darkened at the words of Lieutenant Cole, while he said in a low tone to Lieutenant Lane:

"By Jove! the apology is worse than if he had said nothing—Cole is an ass."

"Yes, but listen."

The guide had heard the words of Lieutenant Cole unmoved, and yet there was a brighter glance of the eye, as he replied in his gentle way:

"As for your opinion of me, Lieutenant Cole, I care nothing whatever, and, as your apology to me implied how you feel, I receive it with the indifference it deserves," and he turned on his heel and was walking away, when Captain Field called out:

"Come, guide, you breakfast with us here. Cole meant well, only expressed himself badly."

"I expressed myself just as the guide has seen fit to understand it," was the lieutenant's quick response.

To the retort of Lieutenant Cole the guide made no response, while Captain Field and Lieutenant Lane both seemed deeply amazed at the conduct of their brother officer.

Ignoring the junior lieutenant, the guide turned to the captain and said:

"I thank you, sir, but I have my haversack of provisions on my saddle, for I left my own horse over under the mountain yonder, when I followed on your trail last evening, for on foot it is not half the distance we had to ride to get here."

"I'll send after your horse, for you must breakfast with us."

"Thank you, I will, and I'll have time to go after him before breakfast is ready," and throwing him-

self upon the spotted pony, he rode rapidly away in the direction he had pointed out.

"He's gotten off now, and ten to one he ambushes us before nightfall," growled Lieutenant Cole.

"See here, Cole, what is the cause of your unmanly, if I may so express it, attack upon that man?" said Captain Field, warmly.

"I do not like your way of putting it, Captain Field; but I flatter myself I am a reader of human nature, and that man has treachery stamped upon every feature."

"On the contrary, I admire his face immensely, for it is manly, fearless, intelligent, yet a trifle sad," remarked Lieutenant Lane.

"I agree with you, Lane, it is a face to fascinate one, and he would be a dangerous fellow among the ladies," said Captain Field.

"Yes, the serpent fascinates the bird," sneered Lieutenant Cole.

"Well, Cole, he has saved us from certain death, and I wish you to treat him with the respect he deserves," sternly said the captain.

"Oh, I'll treat him all right; but see how he received my apology."

"But such an apology, Cole," laughed Lieutenant Lane.

"Well, I eased my conscience by it, and so let it go; but I fear we will yet rue meeting our mysterious guide."

"I will bear the responsibility if we do, so let the matter drop," said Captain Field, showing that he cared to hear no more upon the subject.

Just as breakfast was announced by the cook of the officers' mess the guide was seen returning leading a large, jet-black horse, equipped with a superb Mexican saddle and bridle, mounted and adorned with solid silver.

A gay serape was rolled behind the cantle, there were saddle pockets on either side, with panther-skin covering, a lariat hung at the massive silver-encircled horn, and the knowing ones who glanced at the outfit whispered that there were hundreds of dollars in the saddle and bridle alone, while the horse was a magnificent animal.

"I found him in the little canyon where I had hemmed him in, and he has had plenty to eat and a rest since yesterday afternoon, so is good for a long trail," the guide remarked to Captain Field, who,

with others, was admiring the animal and his equipments.

The breakfast being ready they all fell to in earnest, having vigorous appetites, and under the influence of a hearty meal, Lieutenant Cole offered the guide a cigar, which was, however, declined with thanks.

After breakfast was over the guide led Captain Field to one side, and taking a piece of paper from his pocket, rapidly sketched with his pencil a map of the position where they then were, the deserted camp over twenty miles away, and where lay the Indian village, with the two trails, one of which the Mexican outlaws must follow on their way back across the Rio Grande.

The map showed the skillful hand of an artist, and was just what Captain Field most desired.

"You see, Captain Field, that we can all follow one trail to the first pass, and leaving a part of your force there, I can then lead the others to the second pass, which is twenty miles away."

"I see, sir."

"Having come by the trail we are now on, neither the Mexicans nor the Indians will suspect that we will double and go back to the passes, either one of which can be held by a small against a large force."

"Should the Indians even escort the Mexicans you can check them at the passes."

"And we can ambush them there?"

"Readily, sir, especially if the Indians do not come along, for you can get the Mexicans into a trap at either pass from which there is no escape."

"Then I leave the arrangements in your hands, to place us as you deem best, and we are ready to start when you wish."

"It would be well, sir, to start at once, for should the Indians follow us here, and they doubtless will, discovering that our trail turned off toward the passes, they would at once know our intention; but should we hold on from here toward the fort, they will consider that we have gone thither."

"You are right, sir, but how far will we have to travel on the back trail before we turn back?"

"To the river marked here, sir, about a dozen miles away."

"We can cross and then keep on up the banks to a ford twenty miles above and there can recross to the pass."

"You plan well, and, as I said before, you are our guide, so we follow your lead."

"I thank you, sir, for your confidence in me, especially as I came to you under very suspicious circumstances, and I really do not censure Lieutenant Cole for doubting me.

"But there is one thing I wish to ask of you, Captain Field, before I guide you to the passes."

"You have but to name your terms, sir."

"Pardon me, sir, but you misunderstand me, though perhaps it was my way of expressing myself.

"I do not wish pay for my services, though, after all, I do ask for terms," and the guide seemed greatly embarrassed.

"Name your terms, please."

"I ask, sir, in return for my services, that when your men fire upon the Mexicans they will be ordered not to kill the chief, and more, that you will *give him his freedom*," was the surprising request of the mysterious volunteer guide.

CHAPTER CLIX.

THE GUIDE'S STRANGE DEMAND.

That Captain Field was surprised at the demand of the guide there was no doubt, for his amazement was revealed in his handsome face.

He, however, expressed no surprise by words, but simply said:

"Let me understand it, guide, just as you make the request."

"I ask you, sir, in return for guiding you to the passes, where you are almost certain to ambush the returning Mexican outlaws, yes, and capture them, that you will allow me to take possession of the chief."

"To avenge yourself upon him for some wrong done you, may I ask?"

"Oh, no, sir, to set free."

"You wish to set free this hated outlaw chief?"

"Yes, sir."

"Are you aware that it is Juan Elmo, the Mexican?"

"I am, sir."

"A man who is known, from his red deeds, as 'Butcher,' 'The Merciless,' and whom even the Mexicans call 'The Devil'?"

"That is the man, sir."

Continuing somewhat warmly, the captain said:

"A man upon whose head there is a price set of \$5,000 in gold."

"That reward, sir, I will myself pay to your men if you give him into my keeping."

"You certainly make a most surprising demand."

"I ask for not another of the band, sir; in fact, will volunteer to guide you across the Rio Grande by night to the stronghold of the outlaws, where you can capture a dozen more of the band, with quantities of booty, ponies and their complete outfit; but I do ask for this man Juan Elmo, the Mexican marauder."

"And I cannot understand your pleading for the life of such a man, so must decline to grant your demand, guide."

"I am sorry, sir, for my doing so you will wipe out a band of outlaws, all save their chief."

"Can I not do so and capture him also?"

"No, sir."

"Why not?"

"I will not guide you to the passes."

"Ah! that is it. But suppose I can find them, for I have here your map."

"Captain Field, I fully appreciate your desire to capture this man, and he deserves death, I admit, but I will not see him go into a trap that will bring him to the gallows any more than I would allow you and your men to be ambushed by your foes."

Captain Field saw that the guide was in earnest in what he said, and yet he did not grow angry, simply remarking:

"You have some deep motive for this, guide?"

"I have, sir."

"What is it?"

"To save Elmo, as I said, sir."

"You will not tell me your real motive then?"

"I will tell you that in several instances I am indebted to this same Elmo for saving my life, when I was a prisoner to the Mexican outlaws, and also a captive to the Indians.

"It is true that I once did him a service, but he has returned it, and I admit frankly to you in confidence that, but for his friendship for me, I could not dwell as I do far from protection.

"Now, sir, you know why I ask the life of Elmo, the Mexican, at your hands."

"Yes, and I appreciate your confidence, and will respect it; and owing so much to you as I do, for your rescue of my men and myself from what would

have been certain death, I will grant your demand, and if Elmo, the Mexican, is captured, he shall be turned over to you, for with his band wiped out, and stronghold captured, for I shall hold you to your promise to guide me to it, he will be no longer dangerous."

"I thank you, sir, and I sincerely hope that he can be convinced that his career of outlawry must end," was the response of the guide, who then, looking at a handsome gold watch that he wore, continued:

"It is now after nine o'clock, sir, so we had better be on the march."

"I will give the order at once, sir," and Captain Field walked back to the camp more than ever impressed with his strange guide.

In fifteen minutes the command was mounted and Captain Field rode ahead with the guide, and the more he saw of him the more he admired him.

He sat his horse splendidly, and while conversing never neglected his duty as guide for an instant.

Arriving at the river he had referred to they crossed and held on for half a mile, to show that the trail still went northward, and then he branched off to the right and came back to the river bank, following it up the stream.

It was afternoon when a halt was called at the upper ford, and then crossing, a ride of several miles brought them to a narrow canyon which was the pass through the range.

There were good water and grass there, some timber, and a better place for an ambush could not be asked for.

Having divided his force, and leaving Lieutenant Lane in command, Captain Field himself went out with the rest of his force to the upper pass, the guide setting a brisk pace to get into position by night, he explained.

The second pass was even better for an ambush than the lower one, and Captain Field soon had his men in position, a camp being made half a mile back.

"I think this is the trail they will retreat by," said the guide, confidently.

The pass for an ambush was an ideal one, for it was a deep canyon through a lofty range, with breaks here and there where men could lie in hiding, their presence wholly unsuspected.

"It would be well, sir," explained the guide, "to allow me to take a dozen men to fall in behind the

Mexicans, after they have passed, and when you attack to head off their retreat."

"It was just what I was going to ask you to do, guide."

"Thank you, sir; and you will not forget the orders to your men not to shoot the chief!"

"Ah, yes! But how are they to know him?"

"He always dresses as a Mexican of the highest rank, sir, and wears a mask."

"Yes, I remember now that I have heard so, and that his buttons are of solid gold, and that he wears a ruby serpent, with a head of emeralds and diamonds in his hat worth a small fortune."

"Yes, sir."

"Elmo is certainly a very strange man, for with the birth, bearing and education of a gentleman he is vindictive, vicious and cruel as death. And yet knowing him as you do you save his life?"

"Yes, I wish to cancel the debt I owe him for one reason."

"And that canceled?"

"Then, Captain Field, he must take the consequences of his own acts should he again become an outlaw," was the stern response of the guide.

As it was not thought by the guide that the Mexicans would come through the pass until the following day, the men were allowed a good night's rest in camp, the Texan and one of the scouts standing watch.

It was thought that the outlaws would not start upon their retreat until they were sure that the soldiers had returned to the fort with their captured ponies.

The ponies had been coralled in a canyon near the lower pass, there to wait the result of the ambush, so they were no trouble to those who were to lie in ambush at the two passes.

The morning dawned without any disturbance having occurred during the night, and the guide came in to breakfast, after which the soldiers were to be placed for the attack.

Captain Field and a dozen men took up their positions in the place of ambush, and a dozen more soldiers, under the guide, were stationed among the rocks to cut off the retreat.

There were several men left in the camp, who could be called upon if needed, and the scouts went forward on foot with the guide to report the approach of the outlaws.

They were to return and report to Captain Field when the time came for them to do so.

Going forward through the pass with his scouts, the

guide took up position ahead, where a view of the trail could be seen for miles winding around the mountain.

Hardly had they taken position when the keen eye of the guide detected afar off the coming of the outlaws.

"There they come," he said, quietly, and turning his glass upon them he continued:

"Yes, they are coming, and at a quick pace, anxious to push on as far as possible to-day, and be able to cross the Rio Grande before dawn to-night.

"Ah! as I told Captain Field, they have his deserted horses with them, and I can only make out half-a-dozen Indians in their midst, so that there will not be over two score of them to fight, and the opening volley will reduce the number largely; but ask him to be careful to again warn the men to fire no shot that may kill or wound the chief."

The two couriers at once started back on the trail at a trot, the guide calling after them:

"Say to Captain Field to expect them in about an hour."

Then, having taken another long look at the coming outlaws, and the trail beyond, to see that there was no protecting force of Indians following them, he started back at a brisk walk to his own command.

Turning off among the rocks he came, after a walk of several hundred yards, to a group of soldiers quietly chatting together, smoking or sleeping.

But at his coming they quickly sprang to their feet and saluted him politely.

"They are coming, men, and will be along in half an hour.

"There are, besides the thirty outlaws half-a-dozen or more Indians, and they have, I see, your own horses along, so you will get them back again.

"Be ready to come when you hear my signal, for I shall watch them pass, but, remember, the chief will be dressed in a handsome Mexican suit and wear a mask, while he always rides a jet-black or a snow-white stallion, so fire no shot to wound or kill him."

"No, sir, I want to see him taken alive and strung up," said the sergeant, and the men were of his way of thinking, for they knew not the secret of why they must not wound or kill the outlaw leader.

The guide then went to his place of hiding and it was all of half an hour before the sergeant heard his signal to come with his men, and he at once started with them at a double quick.

But just as they reached the guide a crashing volley of carbines was heard in the pass that told them Captain Field had sprung the trap.

CHAPTER CLX.

THE OUTLAW CHIEF.

The guide, after leaving the soldiers, had been but a short while in position, which was but a few rods distant from the trail, when he beheld two horsemen approaching.

They were Mexicans and rode along with the cautious looks of scouts.

Soon after came a horseman leading a score of others, who followed a respectful distance behind him.

Though all were dressed in the Mexican garb, the one in advance wore a very elegant costume, elaborately trimmed with gold braid, while his sombrero was jet-black and handsomely embroidered.

In the front of the crown glittered the jeweled serpent Captain Field had spoken of, and over his face, concealing it perfectly, was a mask of woven wire.

His saddle, bridle and equipments were very handsome and richly adorned, and he sat his horse with the perfection of grace and equestrian skill.

His form was tall, his shoulders massive, and he looked like one born to lead, even though he led men to deeds of crime.

The men who immediately followed him were all well mounted, equipped and armed, and they also wore black sombreros, which had given them the name of the "Black Hats."

Behind these came a drove of five horses, about a hundred in number, and the animals which Captain Field and his men had been forced to leave in the canyon.

Following these, a number of which carried pack-saddles, were a dozen more of the "Black Hats," driving the animals, and keeping them well up behind the advance force, while in their rear rode a Comanche chief and ten braves.

The Indians had just gotten out of sight when the guide gave the signal, and the sergeant and his men quickly came and took their places in the stands already selected for them.

Then it was that they heard Captain Field's men open fire upon the advance from his ambush.

When the captain gave the order, the two Mexican scouts were almost upon them, with those following within easy range.

"Remember, men, fire on each side of the chief, who, you see, is masked, and be careful in your other shots also not to kill or wound him—now, all ready—fire!"

The two scouts had been ordered to drop the Mexican scouts, and the soldiers had all aimed at the force with the chief, and the shots rang out almost as one rifle.

Both of the Mexican scouts dropped from their saddles, and of the force immediately with the chief half-a-dozen more fell, and also several horses.

Hardly had the rattle of the rifles died away when the chief called out in Spanish:

"We are ambushed, men!

"Back to the Indian village, for your lives!"

The force wheeled quickly, but the soldiers were picking out their men now and several fell, while the retreat upon the horses and those in the rear threw them into confusion, which was increased by the fire of the guide and his force opening in their rear.

The retreat had begun, when suddenly several of the Indians fell under the fire in their rear, and as the Mexicans crowded upon them they too were shot down by another well-aimed volley.

"Pick off your men now at will," ordered the guide, coolly, and a shot from the repeating rifle with which he was armed brought down the Comanche chief.

Beaten in their front and in their rear, huddled together in terror and confusion, and seeing soldiers now advancing upon them, while escape upon either side was impossible, the Mexicans yelled loudly for quarter.

But their cries were silenced by the thunder tones of their chief, who shouted out:

"Cowardly dogs! Do you cry for mercy from bullets, to die later at the end of a rope?"

"Follow me and cut your way back to safety!"

A cheer answered these brave words, and the Mexicans, to the number of a dozen, rallied around their chief, the remainder shrinking from the charge and holding up their hands for mercy.

As the chief and those following him dashed away in the ride for life, the Indians also joined them, and they swept back upon the guide and his men, who had barred their retreat.

As they rushed on they were met by a volley that brought down horses and men and sent the rest back in flight from the terrible fire, for a shot from one of the soldiers had brought the outlaw chief's horse to the ground, and his rider fell heavily and lay motionless.

The scene in the canyon was a thrilling one, even terrible, for shots rattled viciously, the soldiers cheered, the outlaws cursed savagely, and the warcry of the Indians rang above all, with the answering cries of the scouts and the neighing and snorting of frightened horses, all made tenfold more by the echoes that rang back and forth from among the cliffs.

In the midst of this scene the strange guide had run to the side of the fallen chief of the outlaws.

He found him half dazed by his fall, but, conscious of his danger, he was struggling to rise, and, seeing a form approaching, he raised his revolver and fired.

But his hand was unsteady, his eye untrue from his fall, and he missed his aim.

Before he could pull trigger a second time the guide grasped the weapon and cried:

"Hold! Do you not know me?"

"Ha! What does this mean, that you are with my foes?" and the chief struggled to his feet, while he continued, savagely:

"You are a traitor to me, and I will kill you!"

"I am here to befriend you, for your life is in my hands.

"See! your men are crying for quarter, and not one will escape.

"Come with me—quick! or I will not answer for the result."

The chief went silently along, supported by the arm of the guide, for his steps were still unsteady.

The guide led him quickly among the rocks toward where he and the soldiers had been in ambush and if seen by the soldiers no notice was taken of it.

"Now you are safe, for there is a hiding-place among those rocks where you can remain until the command moves on.

"When it does, come out, for you can see from yonder rocky point when they take the trail. You will find a horse saddled and bridled left for you, and food and a canteen of water as well, for I will leave them.

"Your weapons will also be there, and you must disguise yourself as you have done before in visiting me, and make your way to my ranch, where I will soon join you, for you cannot cross the river until it is safe for you to do so.

"Now I must be off or they may come here."

"One moment," cried the chief, eagerly.

"Yes."

"You are the traitor who led these men here?"

"I am true to myself, and my conduct to you now proves that I am no traitor to you.

"There is your hiding-place, and if you value your life go to my ranch and await my coming."

With this the guide turned away, unheeding the call of the chief for him to remain.

Twice did the masked outlaw raise the revolver he still held and take deliberate aim at the retreating form of the guide.

But each time he was prompted not to pull trigger, and the form of the guide disappeared among the rocks, and at once realizing his danger, the masked outlaw ran quickly to the cliff and climbed the rocks to the hiding-place pointed out to him.

When he reached the scene of the combat the guide saw that the soldiers had been too busy gathering up the prisoners and looking after the wounded to notice his departure with the outlaw chief.

The two forces had joined, catching the outlaws in

between them, and not a man had escaped other than the outlaw leader.

The Comanches had suffered a loss of half their party, and several of those escaping death were wounded, but stood defiant and calm awaiting the fate that might be theirs.

Over half the outlaw band had been slain, and for those who had surrendered half-a-dozen were wounded more or less severely.

But their horses, and booty on the pack animals belonging to the soldiers were all in the possession of the victors, who were delighted over their triumph.

Still the soldiers had not escaped unscathed, as four were dead and fully a dozen had received slight wounds, among the latter being Captain Field, who got a bullet through his arm, but made light of it.

With the dead and the dying, and over a score of dead horses on the field, the canyon presented indeed a very battle-like appearance, and the men that had escaped with their lives considered themselves most fortunate.

"Ah, guide, I was looking for you to thank you for a victory that is complete, for we owe it to you that our success was so great," and Captain Field offered his hand to the guide, who responded in his quiet way:

"Your success is only marred, Captain Field, by the escape of the chief; but I did my duty by him, and your victory is a glorious one, while I am now ready to guide you to his stronghold and complete the good work."

"And I am ready to start when you will; but I was told that the chief had fallen by some stray shot, and I was fearful you might misunderstand it after my promise to you."

"No, no, it was a soldier who shot his horse, and I do not believe intentionally.

"The chief fell heavily, but I led him away and gave him his release, so you can make what report you please, sir, upon the matter, even stating your terms with me."

"No, I shall report the chief's escape, that is all.

"Now about leaving here?"

"I think it would be well, sir, to bury the dead outlaws and the redskins here, sir, carry your slain soldiers on to the other side of the river, where we camp to-night, and there give them burial, and from there the force can divide, those going to the fort and those to attack the stronghold."

"I will at once give the order, sir," and Captain Field did so.

CHAPTER CXI.

THE GUIDE KEEPS HIS WORD.

Having issued his orders to bury at once the slain outlaws and redskins, Captain Field, calling to the guide to accompany him, went over to where Lieutenants Lane

and Cole were aiding the surgeon in looking after the wounded.

The captain said as he approached:

"After you have looked to the most serious cases, Sprague, I'll get you to examine my arm, for it bleeds considerably."

"At once, captain," answered the surgeon.

The bullet had cut through the captain's arm, but the wound was skillfully dressed and bound up.

The scouts had been sent up the canyon to see that no force of Indians were following, and in a couple of hours' time the dead outlaws and redskins had been buried, the prisoners thoroughly secured, the wounded all cared for, and the horses all caught, so that the command was ready for the march.

The dead soldiers were strapped on the backs of horses, the most seriously wounded men were mounted with a well man to aid them, and the command took up the march for the river as soon as the guide returned with the scouts who were acting as guards. The guide had gone out on his spotted pony, but returned afoot, yet made no excuse for doing so.

It was near sunset when they came to the stream, and crossed over, going into camp upon the other side, and then Captain Field called his officers about him and held a council, the guide and the surgeon also being present.

"I wish to ask you, guide, how far it is from here to the river?" asked the captain.

"We can ride to the nearest ford, sir, in five hours."

"And how long a ride upon the other side to the outlaws' stronghold?"

"Two hours, sir."

"What do you propose, then?"

"That you dispatch the force that is to return to the fort with the wounded and prisoners in the morning, sir, and you camp here until noon with your men who go to the stronghold.

"Then we can ride to the river and get a couple of hours' rest, cross after dark, capture the stronghold and get over again before daybreak, without our presence being known there to the Mexicans, save the outlaws."

"That is the plan to follow, then; but what force would you take into Mexico?"

"The smaller the better, sir—say twenty picked men—but I forgot to suggest, sir, that it would be well to release your Comanche prisoners, when you leave camp to-morrow, for on foot they cannot get back to their village to do you any harm, and the stories they tell of the wiping out of the outlaw band will do a great deal of good in making them dread your power, and show them that you dared to invade their own country and got out of it with victory on your side."

"A good idea, and we will set them free when we are

ready to leave camp, letting them think we remain behind to guard the force that leaves early.

"Lieutenant Cole, you will take command of the force that goes to the fort, for you, Lane, I wish to accompany me, and you will pick out a sergeant, corporal and sixteen men, with two of the scouts, to go with you."

"What report shall I make to the colonel, sir?" asked Lieutenant Cole.

"None. Simply say that I will make my report upon my return."

"May I ask, sir, how it was that the chief of the outlaws escaped after his horse was shot down, and he, I believed, wounded?"

Captain Field's face flushed, but ere he could reply the guide said in his calm way:

"I aided him to escape, Lieutenant Cole, for, as pay for my services, I was given by Captain Field the life and freedom of the outlaw chief."

"My motive for releasing him I shall not explain, as I consider it none of your business," and the guide walked quickly away without waiting for Lieutenant Cole's response.

That Lieutenant Cole had been the one to disobey orders about the outlaw chief, and had fired upon him, missing his mark, but killing his horse, Captain Field felt assured when he asked the question about the leader of the bandits.

The prompt answer of the guide had relieved Captain Field from making any explanation, and all could see that Lieutenant Cole was considerably cut by the retort he had received.

As the guide had walked away so quickly the lieutenant could not reply to him, but said to Captain Field:

"The guide did want pay after all for his services, and got it, too."

"If you do not like my conduct of this expedition, Mr. Cole, prefer charges against me upon your return to the fort, but let me have no more of your slurs and ill temper now," sharply said Captain Field, while Lieutenant Lane remarked, with fervor:

"Yes, Cole, you are ingenuous, for I think the lives of all of us, the victory we have won, and the capture of hundreds of horses and booty are cheap indeed at the price asked by that splendid fellow, not to speak of the attack on the stronghold which he is to guide Captain Field to."

"If you have any complaint to make bring your charges, and you will find that you have made a mistake," and Lieutenant Lane walked away to join the captain and the guide.

The latter made no comment regarding Lieutenant Cole, but when Lieutenant Lane went off to pick the men who were to accompany them to the outlaws' stronghold, leaving Captain Field alone with the guide, the latter said:

"You doubtless observed, Captain Field, that I rode away from the canyon camp on the spotted pony I had selected the night in the valley, and returned on foot?"

"Yes, Cole attracted my attention to the fact."

"I took the pony, sir, with a haversack of provisions, canteen of water and a serape to leave for the outlaw chief Elmo, as I promised him I would, and to have left him on foot, without anything to eat, would have been cruel even toward one who himself is merciless."

"I told him to make his way toward the Rio Grande, and I trust, sir, you will never again hear of Elmo, the Butcher."

"It will be a victory to get rid of him so easily, and I shall frankly report the small return you asked for all your gallant services to me and my command, though, naturally, I should have been glad to have seen the man hanged," and no more was said upon the subject.

The next morning the force under Lieutenant Cole pulled out for the fort, all of a four days' ride at the pace they would have to travel, and the wounded were carried along on *travois* attached to the Indian ponies.

With the pack animals and large herd of ponies, not to speak of their wounded, the soldiers had their hands full, but went off cheerily, with the good wishes of the comrades they left behind.

The latter force had been cut down for hard work, the men all picked for their nerve and endurance, and all the horses selected as well.

Several extra animals were taken along in case of accident, and only two pack animals bearing provisions.

After an early dinner the captive Indians were given the provisions set aside for them, and they were told to return to their people with all dispatch, taking their wounded comrades with them.

They seemed surprised, yet pleased, and at once took advantage of the permission, not understanding what it meant.

When they were out of sight the command was ordered to mount, and the guide rode to the front, Captain Field riding by his side.

The pace was set at a steady trot, and that the guide knew the country thoroughly all saw by the manner in which he saved every foot by cutting off the distance when it could be done.

A camp was made near the Rio Grande, before sunset, and supper was prepared and men and horses had a rest and food, after which they mounted, forded the river, and at a rapid canter followed the guide through the darkness, and in Mexico he seemed also to know his way thoroughly.

A sharp ride of a dozen miles up into the mountains brought the party to a heavily timbered canyon, and under the direction of the guide the troopers charged in upon a group of adobe huts, surrounding them in an instant.

The surprise was complete, and though the dozen outlaws there showed fight when several of their number fell, the others cried for quarter, and were made prisoners, only one escaping in the darkness.

A large number of horses, and much booty, as well, taken from American homes, was quickly secured, and within an hour after the arrival of the troopers they were upon their return to the river, driving their recaptured animals before them.

Crossing the Rio Grande without meeting a soul, they pushed rapidly on and went into camp only when miles were left between them and the river.

After a rest of a couple of hours, the command again started on the trail, but at a slower pace than before, and after a few miles, the guide said:

"That is your trail to the right, Captain Field, and mine goes to the left, for I leave you now."

"What? You will not go on with me to the fort?"

"No, sir, I have a duty that calls me to my ranch. Some day I hope we may meet again, and if you have to make a raid into the Comanche country I will be glad to serve as your guide."

Entreaties for him to go on were of no avail, and Captain Field was compelled reluctantly to bid him good-by, while the men drew up and saluted as he rode by them on his lone trail.

They watched him until he rode out of sight, saw him turn and wave his hat, and then they pressed on the way to the fort, feeling that to him they owed their lives and the victory they had won.

CHAPTER CLXII.

THE INTRUDER.

A month after the escape of Captain Field's command, and the capture of the outlaws under Elmo, the Butcher, a small troop of cavalry was riding along a trail leading from New Mexico into Texas.

A couple of scouts rode a quarter of a mile in advance, and then followed a handsome man of middle age, wearing a fatigue uniform, the shoulder straps indicating his rank as colonel.

By his side rode a young girl dressed in a blue habit adorned with cavalry buttons, and wearing a hat encircled by a gold military cord above which were a pair of crossed sabers.

Behind them came a captain, and by his side was a lady, evidently his wife, while the colonel's servant and a lady's maid followed with a lieutenant and a score of cavalymen under his command.

Then came a dozen pack animals with their drivers, while bringing up the rear were several more soldiers and a couple of scouts.

The lieutenant in charge of the troopers the reader has already met, for it is Cameron Cole, who had been sent from Fort D— to meet, at a half-way point, Colonel Monastery, who was ordered from New Mexico to make a tour of inspection through the Rio Grande country.

His daughter Marcelite, having been invited to visit friends at Fort D—, had taken the opportunity of her father's going to have an escort, while Captain Silvester's wife was glad to go along also, the captain being attached to Colonel Monastery as his aide.

At the first sight of Marcelite Monastery, Lieutenant Cole had fallen in love with her, and felt proud of the distinction of serving as her escort, though he had not at first relished the duty he was ordered upon to go through a most dangerous country to guard the colonel to the fort, for he had not known then that the ladies were in the party.

When he had returned to the fort, after the capture of the outlaws, he had very quickly thought better of making any charges against his captain on account of his terms with the mysterious guide, and nothing more had been thought of the matter, so it was dropped, Captain Field being highly praised for his success, though he was always frank to admit that he did not deserve the honor of the victory.

The captain, however, had made a full report of the affair, and in it had recommended the guide as in every

way worthy of some reward from the Government for his valuable services.

The two scouts ahead of the escort of Colonel Monastery and his party came to a halt in a pretty valley that led up into a range of mountains, and where grass and water were plentiful.

"This is the best camping-place, sir, for the night, though the sun is yet an hour high," said one of the scouts, Wild Will, who had accompanied the colonel from the fort in New Mexico, and was to go clear through to Fort D— with him.

"All right, Wild Will, we will camp here if Lieutenant Cole deems best, though it is early yet to halt."

Thus appealed to Lieutenant Cole replied:

"This is the best camping-place, sir, as Wild Will says, and I camped here on my way to meet you, sir."

"And we will have ample time to reach the fort day after to-morrow, lieutenant?"

"Yes, sir; we can make it early in the afternoon."

"Then here we camp," answered the colonel, and the halt was ordered and a busy scene followed.

There were two small tents pitched for the ladies and the three officers, the rest of the party throwing up wickiups to suit themselves, and a tempting supper was soon being prepared.

Lieutenant Cole had at once placed his sentinels some distance from the camps, for they were in a most dangerous country, and the colonel was more anxious than he cared to show for the safety of his daughter and Mrs. Silvester, with the small force of soldiers they had to defend them in case of an attack by a large band of Indians.

After supper, when night had fallen upon the valley, Marcelite Monastery got out her guitar and began to sing several Mexican ballads.

Her mother was a Mexican, Colonel Monastery having fallen in love with her when he was stationed at Fort D— years before, she being the sister of an officer of the army of Mexico, who was the colonel's—then lieutenant's—warmest friend.

Marcelite possessed all the graces for which her mother had been noted, added to which was the spirit and brilliancy of an American girl, and she at once, upon leaving school and joining her father upon the frontier, became the acknowledged belle of borderland.

Possessing a beautiful, sympathetic voice, Marcelite lulled the camp to silence to listen to her, and had just finished singing a plaintive ballad, when suddenly all started as a stranger appeared in their midst, as they sat about the campfire.

He had come from the darkness into the circle of the firelight like an apparition just as the last notes of the song had died away.

Mrs. Silvester uttered a cry of alarm, Lieutenant Cole sprang to his feet, and every eye was fixed upon the tall form of the unknown intruder into the camp, as he stood before them.

"Well, sir, who are you, and how dare you intrude into the privacy of this camp?"

The speaker was Lieutenant Cole, and he spoke sternly as he suddenly faced the intruder.

The latter stood upright, calm and with commanding mien before the circle about the campfire, every eye upon him.

To the question of Lieutenant Cole he replied in a low tone:

"Your memory is short-lived, Lieutenant Cole, that you fail to recognize me, for we have met before and under circumstances one cannot readily forget."

"Ah! you are the unknown guide!"

"Yes, I am the guide, sir, and I beg to offer an apology for my intrusion into the privacy of your camp by stating that once more I come to warn you of danger and to offer my services."

"We have as our chief scout and guide Wild Will, a man whom you must have heard of, so we really do not need your services, sir, though thanking you."

"I have heard often of Wild Will," was the unmoved rejoinder, "and acknowledge his just fame as a scout; but even he cannot tell what is on the trail ahead of him, and hence I am here to warn you, and glad indeed am I to be able to do so now that I see that there are ladies in the party."

"As commander of the escort, sir, I am willing to trust to Wild Will to guide us," replied Lieutenant Cole.

But behind him came the words:

"I am not, lieutenant, when this gentleman states there are dangers ahead on the trail which Wild Will cannot know of or discover until too late, perhaps."

The speaker was Wild Will himself, and turning upon him Lieutenant Cole asked:

"Do you admit that you are at fault in the trail, Wild Will?"

"Oh, no, lieutenant, the trail is all right; but what danger is there ahead in it is the question."

"I have just come in from a scout, but discovered nothing, and yet I saw this gentleman enter our camp unseen by anyone until he got close to this fire, as I followed him, and if he is the guide of whom I have heard who saved Captain Field and his command, I have full faith in him."

"Well said, Wild Will, for I saw Field's report of that expedition and his mysterious guide. Are you that man, sir?" and Colonel Monastery approached the stranger.

"I am, sir."

"You appear to like the Mexican attire, rather than our simple garb, but that is nothing against you, and I am glad to meet you."

The colonel offered his hand, which the guide took, raising his sombrero courteously as he did so.

Then Lieutenant Cole said:

"I am sorry, Colonel Monastery, that the guide and I have never seemed to agree, though I confess the valuable services he rendered us, for I was one of Captain Field's officers, you know, on that expedition after the outlaws, but I think now we can trust wholly to the guidance of Wild Will."

"I am no fool, Lieutenant Cole, and I wish to know what danger lies before me," was the scout's blunt response, and Marcelite smiled as she saw how it might be taken that the lieutenant was a fool in declining advice.

Colonel Monastery replied:

"I will be glad to hear what you have to report, when you explain how you got into our camp unseen?"

As the colonel had taken the matter in hand, Lieuten-

ant Cole was compelled to remain silent, but he anxiously watched for the reply of the guide.

"I came down the mountain, sir, and passed in between your sentinels, not wishing to attract the attention of several Indian scouts who have been watching you, by having a sentinel challenge me."

"Do you mean that Indian scouts are watching this camp, sir?" asked Wild Will, quickly.

"There were three who were watching the camp, but they returned to the valley just before I came between your line of guards."

"Then they came from ahead on the trail?"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you inform me just what the danger is that we have to meet?" asked the colonel, with an anxious glance at his daughter and Mrs. Silvester.

"Let me explain, sir, that I have a ranch to the southwest of here some forty miles, and while hunting to-day on the range beyond, my glass revealed a large band of Indians in the pass through this range."

"I saw by their position and actions that they were lying in ambush for some one, and at once decided to warn whoever it was of their danger if I could reach them in time."

"I accordingly crossed the range and the plain between it and this one ahead, left my horse a few miles from here in the mountains, and came on foot to lie in wait in the trail."

"But when I reached the valley I saw three Indian scouts on foot watching this clump of timber, and then I discovered that whoever it was that they had gone into ambush for had camped here."

"I watched their movements until after nightfall, when, seeing them depart, I came here to warn you, sir, and also to offer my services as guide to lead you by a trail I know over the range, and thus avoid the ambush prepared for you by the Comanches, who are all of two hundred in number."

CHAPTER CLXIII.

THE NIGHT RIDE.

The terse, calmly-told story of the guide was listened to by all with the deepest interest, the two ladies especially impressed by his splendid form and very handsome, sad face and modest bearing.

Colonel Monastery was about to reply when Lieutenant Cole said:

"Warned of our danger, colonel, cannot Wild Will be our guide around to avoid it, as we have not force enough to fight the Comanches."

"Pardon me, lieutenant, but I know only this trail we are on, never having been but once before in this country, so I could not guide you by night around the pass, for it must be done to-night," Wild Will responded.

"What objection have you to this man being our guide, Lieutenant Cole, after he has warned us of our danger?" the colonel asked, somewhat sternly, for he could not but notice that the young officer wished to get rid of the guide.

"My objection, colonel, is not to be under obligation to outsiders, when we can do for ourselves."

"Will you undertake to guide the command around the pass to-night?"

"I am not a guide or scout, sir; but perhaps one of your other scouts can do so."

"I can vouch for them, that they cannot," Wild Will responded.

"Pardon me, colonel, I do not care to force my services upon Lieutenant Cole, who commands this escort, but having saved his life upon a former occasion, I supposed that he would be willing to have faith in me, though it is a matter of utter indifference to me if he has not; but for your sake, and those with you, I advise that you allow me to guide you safely, if Wild Will and his scouts cannot do so."

"You shall do so, sir."

"You are right, colonel, for I know that this is a country that few scouts know, and two hundred Comanches on our trail are to be avoided, even though we had Lieutenant Cole's entire troop of cavalry."

"As for myself, I pass, and the scouts along will draw out of a game, too, which they know nothing about."

The colonel smiled at Wild Will's sportsmanlike way of expressing himself, and turning to the volunteer guide, asked:

"Do you consider it best to go on to-night, sir?"

"By all means, sir, for to-morrow will be too late."

"And you will undertake to be our guide to safety?"

"I will gladly do so, sir, as you have ladies along, though, of course, I regret to place Lieutenant Cole under obligation to me."

"I shall not feel that I am, sir, for I believe we could avoid the danger; yet for the sake of the ladies, it is best to take no risks."

"But you will accompany us, Lieutenant Cole, and not attempt to extricate yourself from the danger?" said Marcelite, and the officer's face flushed, while Mrs. Silvester smiled, for there seemed to be a tinge of sarcasm in the question.

"I am under orders, Miss Monastery, to escort you in safety to the fort," was the lieutenant's reply.

"Then I am glad my father has accepted the services of this gentleman as a volunteer guide, and," turning now and extending her little hand, "I desire to thank you, sir, for your kindness in coming to warn us of our danger."

The guide bowed low, in taking the extended hand, and replied:

"It is a satisfaction as well as a pleasure, Miss Monastery, to do my duty."

After a few words apart with Wild Will, Colonel Monastery turned again to the volunteer guide and said:

"I will ask you to assume your duties as guide, and Wild Will will aid you when needed."

"When do you wish to start?"

"The sooner the better, sir, for it is a rough climb, and a long ride across the plain to the range beyond, while the darkness of the night will delay us by slow travel."

"Lieutenant Cole, please break camp and get ready to start at once," ordered the colonel, and the young officer saluted and walked off to obey, but it was evident that he was very sorry to have the guide again cross his path, yet he was too shrewd not to wish to profit by his

services, though he hoped to find the danger not as great as the guide had reported.

The tents were quickly taken down and packed away with the camp utensils, and the command was ready to start in half an hour.

An extra horse had been given to the guide, who rode ahead with Wild Will, the other scouts having been left to guard the rear.

Turning back on the trail they had come for a short distance the guide then branched off sharply to the left.

He had no trail to guide him now, and did not seem to need any.

Wild Will rode by his side and watching him closely soon became convinced that he knew just what he was about, for he went on through the darkness unerringly.

Up the valley he went to the foothills, then over them into the mountain range and up the steep side, along the edge of dangerous canyons and through dense timber, under the shadow of overhanging cliffs and then on up to the summit of the mountains, where a halt was made for a short rest before the descent was begun on the other side to the plain below.

The descent of the other side of the mountain was more dangerous than had been the ascent.

The journey had to be made in Indian file, and even in the darkness it could be seen that there were perils passed which it was better for some of those with dizzy heads not to have seen by daylight.

Not once did the strange guide falter, and even Wild Will, with his iron nerve and cool head, wondered that the man dared risk certain places for the timid ones to follow.

"Leave all to your horses—mine will lead the way and yours will follow," he had said at starting on the descent.

Like a serpent the long line wound its way down toward the valley, and after a ride of a couple of hours reached the plain.

A rest was wished for by all, but the guide said:

"It is not very far from here to where the Indians are in ambush, and some stragglers may come this way, so we must push on."

So push on they did across the barren plain, for it was far different from the fertile valley beyond the range which they had crossed.

There was not a bush or tree in sight, only a rock here and there, with sand and pebbles.

The ride across was but six miles, and a short halt was made before the climb up the mountains before them.

The guide had told the colonel and Wild Will all the danger they had to fear, so that the horses were not unsaddled, and the men were not allowed to go to sleep.

After fifteen minutes' rest they again mounted and began the climb of the mountain and were glad to find it less high, dangerous and steep than the one behind them.

The top was reached as the eastern skies began to take on that peculiar light that betokens the approach of day, and here the guide called a halt and said:

"Colonel Monastery, if you will allow Lieutenant Cole to continue on with the party, for the trail now is plain, I would like to have you, Captain Silvester and Wild Will remain behind for a while that I may show

you the sight that caused me to try and prevent you going into an ambush."

"I will be glad to see it," answered the colonel, and gave the necessary orders.

The command then moved on, one of the scouts leading, for they had come into a well-defined trail and the guide had told him that a mile away they would find a good camping-place.

Those whom he had asked to remain dismounted and awaited the coming of dawn.

Gradually the day brightened, and hiding among the rocks on the mountain top, the guide said:

"Now direct your glasses at the foot of yonder high cliff, where you will see a small clump of timber."

They did so, and Colonel Monastery said quickly:

"There is an Indian camp there, and their horses are grazing upon the little meadow near the cliff."

"Yes, sir, and they are guarding the pass through which you were coming."

"In fact, sir, they are now waiting for you to ride into an ambush, for their three scouts reported last night that you had gone into camp in the valley, instead of pressing on to the camping-place at the mouth of the pass."

"They will soon discover that you do not come, and scouts will be sent out to reconnoitre, and it will be shown that you have left."

"Then these will follow you over the mountain with part of their force, while the others will push on to where you crossed the plain and then pursue."

"That is just what they will do, and, pard, I, for one, owe you my life," said Wild Will.

"For if we had gone into that pass not one of us would have escaped, that is certain," and Wild Will grasped the hand of the guide.

"Yes, you certainly have saved us from an awful fate," and the colonel spoke with deep emotion as he thought of his beautiful daughter as being killed or falling alive into the hands of the savages.

Captain Silvester had the same thoughts, and he, too, was profuse in his gratitude to the guide, who remarked:

"Now, there is but one thing to do, as I see it."

"My horse is near the camp where I sent the command, and, if you, Wild Will, will go and get your breakfast and fetch him to me, I will remain here and watch those redskins."

"It will be a couple of hours yet, Colonel Monastery, before they really will be able to start in pursuit, and then they have to cross the plain, and this range, so you have all of five hours' start, after resting."

"But their horses are fresh, while yours are jaded, as well as your people, and I would suggest, sir, that you leave Wild Will here with me, and a couple of scouts and eight soldiers to make a stand at this very place."

"We can beat them back, for they will suppose your whole force is here, and then Wild Will and his men can hasten on after you, I remaining alone to keep up a fire with my repeating rifle."

"When they again attack I will have gone, and the delay will have put even your tired horses beyond all chance of being overtaken."

"Your plan is a good one, sir, all excepting leaving you alone here."

"Do not fear for me, Colonel Monastery, for even if the Indians saw me they would do me no harm."

"Indeed? Then you are their friend?" said the colonel in surprise.

"No, sir; I am their foe, but they are *my friends*," was the response.

CHAPTER CLXIV.

THE GUIDE STILL A MYSTERY.

As the mysterious guide made no explanation of his remark that he was the foe of the Indians, while they were his friends, Colonel Monastery did not press him for one, but remarked:

"Wild Will will remain here on the watch, while you go with Captain Silvester and myself to camp and get your own horse."

"When the men come back who are to remain here, you can lead them, and we can send Wild Will his breakfast."

"If you so wish, sir, I will," said the guide, and he added:

"As there is good water and grass in the camp below, and none here, it would be well to take the scout's horse along, and when the men return let them come on foot, and pick up their animals on their retreat, thus giving them a long rest."

"A good idea that," said Wild Will, and he took up his position as sentinel, glass in hand, while the others rode on down the range to the camp.

It was just a mile away in a hole in the range, where there was a lake and grass and wood in plenty.

All except the cooks had thrown themselves down to rest, after the horses were unsaddled and staked out, and when Colonel Monastery rode up with Captain Silvester and the guide, breakfast was just ready.

"You breakfast with us, guide," said the colonel.

The guide bowed his thanks and removed his sombrero as Marcelite and Mrs. Silvester approached.

They then saw by daylight his darkly-bronzed face, handsome, fearless, and full of intelligence.

His black hair was worn long and fell in waving masses upon his broad shoulders, his hands and feet were small and shapely, and his dress was a rich one—that of a Mexican.

His manners were courtly, his language that of a refined and educated man, and his whole bearing was so antagonistic to one who led the wild life that he must, that no one could understand the mystery of his doing so.

"It was reported that your terms with Captain Field for the services you rendered him were simply the life and pardon of the chief of the outlaws," said Captain Silvester, as they were eating breakfast.

"Yes, sir, that is all I asked."

"You certainly must have had some strong motive for wishing to spare such a man, for I have heard such terrible stories of Elmo, the Mexican."

It was Mrs. Silvester who spoke now, and in response the guide said:

"I had a strong notion, Mrs. Silvester, to return debts of gratitude I owed him, though I am sorry to say he is as bad as he has been painted."

"And where is he now?" asked Marcelite.

"He went to Mexico after his escape, miss, and I trust will give the United States Government no further trouble."

"Now, a word about yourself," said the colonel.

The guide bowed in silence.

"You are a ranchero, I believe?"

"I am, sir. I live on my ranch a day's ride from here."

"The Indians do not harm you?"

"No, sir, they are my friends, as I told you, sir."

"And you their foe?"

"Yes, sir, for I owe nothing to them, and they are the enemies of all whites, but circumstances once placed me in a position that protects me from them."

"You are a young man, scarcely thirty, I should say, a man of education and refinement, so why not give up this wild life of danger and solitude?"

"I came here, sir, not from choice, but from circumstances beyond my control, and the wild life I lead chimes in with my humor."

"Yet you would not refuse to come out of it, if it were possible?"

"How do you mean, sir?"

"I mean that you have eminently shown yourself fitted for leadership."

"Your conduct of Field's expedition he has told me of, and I know what your services last night were."

"Knowing this, and your nerve under trying circumstances, added to your appearance and bearing, I think I am safe in saying that I can procure for you an appointment as lieutenant in the United States army, for the President would be glad to reward your services by such a well-deserved appointment."

The face of the guide flushed, and he seemed to feel what the colonel had said, but replied:

"Thank you, Colonel Monastery, but I do not care for an appointment in the Government service other than the one I now hold, though I appreciate your kindness and thank you very much."

The colonel, Captain Silvester and Lieutenant Cole, as well as the two ladies, looked at the unknown guide with surprise and increased interest, for his words, seemingly a "slip of the tongue," "other than the one I now hold," were a seeming confession that he was more than a ranchero in reality.

"Then you are in the Government service now?" said the colonel in a direct way.

"I am a Government officer, sir," was the direct response, though said with evident reluctance.

"And may I ask your name, sir, for we have never known you as other than the unknown and mysterious guide," ventured the colonel.

"My name is William Frederick, sir," was the quiet response.

"And where can you be addressed, Mr. Frederick, by letter, may I ask?" the colonel inquired.

"A letter to me addressed to Fort D—, care of the Antler there, will reach me, as I send there for my supplies, sir," was the reply, and he continued, as though anxious to escape further questioning:

"You had better all get what rest you can now for a couple of hours, and I will return to relieve Wild Will,

and take what soldiers you may wish to send back with me, sir."

"Lieutenant Cole, select ten of the best mounted men to return with Mr. Frederick to the top of the range, and they are to leave their horses here, but all ready for a hasty departure."

"After a rest of two hours more we will continue the march ourselves."

The lieutenant saluted and walked away to obey his orders.

Having obeyed his orders, Lieutenant Cole returned to the headquarters camp to find that the guide had departed, the ladies had gone to take a short sleep in the tent pitched for them, and the colonel and Captain Silvester were spreading their blankets to follow their example.

The soldiers were already asleep, save the guards, and so the lieutenant sought his own blanket for a nap.

When he left the camp the guide wended his way along the little valley until he came to a canyon into which he turned.

It was narrow, grass-carpeted, and a spring flowed through it in a tiny stream.

A short distance from the entrance two or three small trees had been cut down and ranged as a barrier across it, and beyond was seen a splendid black horse cropping the grass.

At sight of his master he uttered a low neigh and came trotting up to the barrier.

"Well, comrade, you have had a good time of it, for you have literally been in clover here, and now we must go."

So saying, the guide went to some bushes and took out his saddle, bridle and traps, and putting them on the horse, mounted and rode away from the canyon.

He took the trail leading near the camp, but all were asleep, and no one saw him, and he continued on up to the top of the range, whither the soldiers had already gone on foot.

Reaching the summit, he found the soldiers had already arrived and were asleep, while Wild Will was calmly eating the breakfast they had brought him.

"Well, pard, what news?" asked the scout, as the guide approached.

"After a sleep of two hours Colonel Monastery will continue the march and that start will keep them from being overtaken by the Comanches, if we check them here, as we must."

"But what have you seen?"

"It is just as you said, pard."

"There was a great excitement half an hour ago, and some of them mounted and rode through the pass, while the rest went up along the range—see them?" and Wild Will pointed to where the Indians were then halted upon the trail of the troopers.

CHAPTER CLXV.

SURPRISED.

The Comanches were beyond doubt coming at once upon the trail of the party, that had so cleverly eluded them.

Their scouts had discovered, soon after dawn that,

they had left their camp, and so had hastened back with the news to the large force lying in ambush.

There the Indians had divided, a third of their number mounting in hot haste to follow them over the mountains, while the rest had hastened on to head them off at the point where they must come down the range into the plain.

They knew the perilous path over the range, but did not believe that it was known to the white scouts, or that the party would attempt to make the ride by night.

They therefore supposed that they would be able to head them off at the bottom of the range, and with half a hundred warriors behind them, they would be caught in a trap almost as secure as the one that the pass would have been, only they would not be able to surprise them.

They supposed that a scout had gone on at night and discovered them in ambush, and thus thwarted their surprise of the soldiers; but they felt sure of giving them a crushing defeat at the foot of the range, and thus wipe out the stain of their missing Captain Field's command a month before, for they little dreamed that, as then, the same mysterious guide had rescued Colonel Monastery's party from a massacre.

While Wild Will ate his breakfast the guide was watching the Indians through his glass, and said:

"They have discovered that they were too late, that you have crossed the plains, and already they are starting upon the trail."

"Oh, yes, even though their ponies are fresh, they will not be here under two hours and a half."

"And the command will then have been an hour on the march?"

"Yes."

"Where did you wish to make a stand?"

"Just where we are, Wild Will, for, as you see, they have to wind a zigzag trail in coming to this spot, which brings them within range for several hundred yards."

"That is so."

"We can drive them back by a hot fire, and then, while they are holding a pow-wow as to what to do, you and your soldiers can run down the trail to where your horses are, and the longer rest they have had will soon enable you to overtake the command."

"And you, pard?"

"Oh, I'll stay here, firing a few shots to keep their scouts back, and then mount and ride away."

"If you are not seen."

"Trust me for that."

"Why not go on with me?"

"No, I must return to my ranch; thank you."

"I wish you were an army officer, or at least a scout, sir."

The guide smiled, and then told Wild Will what Colonel Monastery had said about wishing to get him a commission.

"Good! he'll do it, and I'll chip in my little recommend also, for I can vouch for it that, with the exception perhaps of that great scout of the Northwest, there is not one man of the army that can follow a trail or knows the lay of a country as you do."

"See, those fellows are coming more rapidly than I thought, and they will run on foot up the range, so as to relieve their ponies."

"They will reach here by the time the colonel will have been half an hour on the trail," said the guide.

The two men then sat down and watched the coming Comanches as they pressed on hotly along the trail.

They saw them stretched out in a long line, yet enough were in advance to prove dangerous in an attack.

At the base of the range they made a short halt for their comrades to come up, and then on foot they ascended the steep trail, leading their ponies.

When they had gotten half way up the range Wild Will awoke the corporal and his men, and they were placed in the most advantageous position.

Refreshed by their breakfast and sleep, and with the redskins near at hand, over a hundred in number, they were ready for the fray, and stood cool and determined, awaiting the command to fire.

Soon an Indian chief came in sight, leading his pony, and behind him rapidly appeared his braves, until half a hundred came into view.

By the time that the chief was in range the whole party, except those who were following the trail over the other range, were in view, and Wild Will said:

"There are just a hundred and forty of them."

"Yes, and we are fifteen; but we will make them believe that we are the whole force."

"See, there come the others now, out from the base of the other range," said the guide, pointing to where the other force of redskins were coming into view.

After a few moments more, and when the chief was not sixty yards distant, the guide said:

"Now, men, pick out your targets and fire at the word."

"Let no shot miss."

"Ready, aim! fire!"

There was a crashing sound as the carbines of the troopers and repeating rifles of Wild Will and the guide flashed together, and a wild, startled yell from the amazed redskins, who were driven hastily back to cover.

The soldiers had obeyed their instructions, and picked their targets, for hardly a shot failed to find a human form, while the repeating rifles of the guide and Wild Will dropped half-a-dozen more bullets among the flying redskins.

Back to cover as fast as they could run went the Indians, some springing upon their ponies and riding them back at full speed, and others deserting their horses to find shelter for themselves.

The repeating rifles continued popping until they were out of range, the soldiers, by Wild Will's order, getting ready to retreat down the hill to their horses.

"Have my horse ready for me, for I will soon be along," said the scout, and with a salute of farewell to the guide the soldiers departed at a brisk pace down the hill.

When they had gone Wild Will said:

"Now, pard, you expect me to desert you?"

"Oh, no, it is not that, for I will be all right; but I expect you to go after your men with all haste."

"They can find their way on after the command."

"No, for they will not leave without you, and as they are not trailers, they might lose their way without you."

"Will you go, too?"

"Do you not know that these Indians might show themselves in a few minutes, and if no shot was fired at them, they would come on at a rush and perhaps overtake the command?"

"That is true; but there is no way that they can flank this place?"

"Only by going back to the plain and crossing miles above."

"Then you are safe, you are perfectly sure, if I leave you?"

"Perfectly, for they would not harm me, if they did not know that I was now firing upon them."

"Then I will go on after the command, though it is not my way to desert a comrade in trouble."

"Some day I hope we will meet again, and if you ever need a friend, remember Scout Wild Will, pard," and the scout wrung the hand of the guide and was off at a run.

He heard a shot now and then from the guide, doubtless fired at a redskin who exposed himself, and when he reached the camp he found the soldiers with their horses saddled and bridled and ready to leave.

"Come, pards, we must push on after the command," he said.

"And that brave gentleman would stay behind, sir?" asked the corporal.

"Yes, he wished to keep up the idea that we were still there—but hark! That is fierce firing, and the Indians are using their rifles."

"Push on, corporal, and follow the trail, and I will come on soon after. But I must go back to that bold fellow's aid, for I have an idea that he needs me."

With this, Wild Will spurred on up the mountain for some distance, then dismounting, he threw his bridle rein over a limb and ran on at full speed, for he did not wish to tire his horse out with the climb.

He was a fleet runner, and had wonderful endurance, but the trail was a steep one, and he was panting like a hound when he arrived.

What he discovered was the daring guide standing at bay and firing his revolvers, one in each hand, as rapidly as he could pull trigger.

Without a word to the guide, Wild Will uttered his terrible warcry and called out:

"Ho, men, now fire!"

As he did so he began to fire with his repeating rifle, and just in the nick of time, for the Indians were coming on at a run, firing their rifles and arrows as they did so, for a number of them had firearms.

The arrival of the scout at once checked their advance, for they felt that if the command had retreated, as they believed, they were coming back again.

"You are a dead shot, pard, as well as a good guide and scout," said Wild Will, as he glanced down on the trail.

"They made a rush on me, evidently suspecting that the command had gone, and after emptying my rifle I began with my revolvers."

"And did good service with both, I see."

"As you did, for your coming was just in time, as I was about to mount my horse and run for it, though I felt that the Indians would recognize me and no longer regard me as a friend."

"But let us empty our rifles together with one hand,

at yonder point, and fire a revolver with the other, and the shots will sound as though a score of men were firing."

"A good idea, and then retreat?"

"It will be best, and you can hasten on after the command."

"Yes, and you?"

"I will go to the camp and then must go my way."

"Which way is that?"

"I will join the Indians."

"Join those redskins?" cried Wild Will, in surprise.

"Yes, for I can come up as though not in the command, and I can tell them a story that will prevent further pursuit."

"You are a very remarkable man, sir," said Wild Will, impressively.

The guide smiled, and the weapons having been reloaded, the two fired their rifles and a revolver each together, aiming at the point where the Indians had disappeared.

Then they hastily departed, the guide mounting his horse while Wild Will ran down the hill.

Reaching the scout's horse, the two parted when they had reached the camp, and while Wild Will went on after the command, when he disappeared from sight the guide deliberately took the trail back up the mountain again.

CHAPTER CLXVI.

FRIEND OR FOE?

Slowly up the mountain rode the guide, after leaving Wild Will, until he reached the top, the scene of his combat with the Indians.

He went along most cautiously, like one who expected to be fired upon at a moment's notice, and yet he saw not a sign of a redskin.

Their last lesson had made them think that the soldiers were still there, so they became very cautious and were going to resort to strategy to accomplish what force could not do.

As he reached the summit the guide dismounted, and fastening his horse to a stunted pine, he took a position from whence he could glance over upon the trail.

The trail ran there down the mountain in a zigzag course, and around under the edge of the cliff behind which the Indians had taken shelter.

It was higher as they went down, and in no place was there a chance to scale it all the way to the plain below, so that the redskins would have to retreat that way, go further up the range, and seek another crossing miles away.

This the guide knew so that he was not at all disturbed by fear that the Indians could make this flank movement over the range and overtake Colonel Monastery and his party.

"No, they will have to come this way, but when their comrades come up with them they may make another charge upon the trail."

"As long as they are quiet I will not show myself, for it will give the colonel that much more time to press on and get beyond pursuit."

"I will wait here until I discover a suspicious movement upon their part, and then show myself."

So the guide calmly sat down upon a rock, where, between a clump of bushes he could view the trail.

An hour he had been there and then he saw a head peep around a rock not a hundred yards away.

"I must show myself," and so saying, he ran back to his horse, mounted, and placing his hand to his mouth gave three long, distinct warcries.

Almost instantly came a dozen echoing similar cries from behind the ridge, and a moment after the guide rode into view, his hands raised above his head, the palms turned toward the redskins.

A dozen rifles were raised, and it was an instant of great peril; but they were quickly lowered, and he rode to the edge of the ridge and called out in the Comanche tongue:

"Let my red brothers come here."

Without a moment of hesitation, half a hundred forms sprang into view, and from their lips broke the same long, loud warcry which the guide had uttered a short while ago.

The warcry was taken up by the Indians beyond the cliff, and the mountains rang with a thousand echoes.

But the guide did not change color, but simply sat his horse with unmoved face awaiting the approach of the Indians, for they were hastening toward him, while, though they did not fire upon him, they yet looked very dangerous.

As those on foot reached the top of the ridge, there came from behind the cliff their companions on horseback, all pressing toward the ridge.

"My red brothers are welcome."

"Where is the great chief, Red Hat?" said the guide in a loud voice as the Indians drew near.

"The great chief Red Hat is wounded badly by the bullets of the palefaces, the people of the Lone Chief, the foes of the Comanches."

"Where are the paleface braves, and why is the Lone Chief here?" came the answer of a tall chief who had taken command after the fall of the head chief.

"Is it the Mustang Killer who speaks?" questioned the guide, looking closely at the young chief, as though he now recognized him.

"I am the Chief Mustang Killer," proudly answered the young Comanche, his braves standing silently about him.

"Let the Lone Chief tell him, then, that he saw the paleface soldiers pass, heard them fire upon his brothers, and when they had gone on the trail, he came here to see if he could not be good medicine for the braves of the Red Hat who had been hit by the bullets of their foes."

"The Lone Chief talks well, his heart is good, but let him first tell with a straight tongue of the foes of the Comanches," said the young chief, and a grunt of approbation ran through the crowd of warriors.

"What would the great young chief Mustang Killer know?" calmly asked the guide.

"He saw the paleface braves?"

"Oh, yes, he was near them."

"How many braves were there?"

The guide silently raised his hands, with his fingers spread open, four times to indicate forty.

"There was a great chief?"

"Yes."

"How many squaws?"

"Three," meaning the two ladies and Marcelite's maid.

"How long have they been gone?"

"Three hours."

"All of them?"

"No, the great white scout, Wild Will, and a comrade remained behind."

"There were more."

"The Mustang Killer is wrong."

"The two had rifles that speak many times, and they did so with their little guns," and the guide showed how the many shots had been made, adding:

"The Lone Chief has eyes; he saw them."

"The Comanche braves were fooled, for the braves had marched away, went long ago also."

"The Mustang Killer will pursue with his braves and capture them, for the scalp of the great white Evil Spirit, Wild Will, is worth much to the Comanches, and it was the Evil Spirit who kept the palefaces from falling into our trap at the range yonder."

"The Evil Spirit is a great scout, and the Mustang Killer would only follow to his death, for the many speaking guns of the palefaces would cut down his braves like trees before the storm."

"They are far away, and fleet riders are coming out from the fort to meet them, so let not the Mustang Killer lead his braves to death."

"The Lone Chief has seen—he knows," and the guide spoke impressively.

The impressive manner of the guide had its weight with the Comanche braves, and the young chief who was inclined to push on in pursuit, saw that he would be alone in his wish.

They had already lost a score of braves killed, and as many more wounded more or less seriously, among them being their head chief, Red Hat.

To push on after the palefaces, several hours in advance, and with the prospect, as the guide had hinted, that other soldiers were coming from the fort to meet them, might result far more seriously to them.

So the Mustang Killer, though most anxious to make a name for himself, saw what the temper of his bravest was and concluded to yield.

He therefore said:

"The Lone Chief has spoken well, and it was the wish of the great chief from beyond the river that the Comanches should listen to his words."

"Where is the great chief, the Paleface Killer, now?"

"The Paleface Killer is beyond the river, for the white braves destroyed his camp and captured his riders," was the guide's answer.

"Let the Lone Chief come now to see the Red Hat," and the Mustang Killer led the way down the trail to where the wounded chief was lying.

The guide dismounted and followed him, and they soon came to where the chief lay upon a blanket.

A bullet had pierced his side, and the warriors who had gathered about him felt that he was mortally wounded.

Glancing at him with a professional eye the guide ordered him taken up, with the other wounded, and

borne over the ridge, where there was plenty of water, wood and grass.

To the Mustang Killer the guide said that it would be well to camp where they were for several days, until the mortally wounded had died, and the chief Red Hat was able to be removed, for he was rallying rapidly, and after a week could be carried by easy marches to his village.

The influence of the guide seemed to be felt by each brave, and the young chief, in the chance of Red Hat's recovery, dared not to follow the bent of his own humor, so he had the dead buried, instead of being sent to their village, as he had intended, by a small force, while he pressed on with a band of picked warriors in pursuit of the soldiers.

Having decided to remain for some days, the camp was made more comfortable for the wounded, hunters were sent out for game, and a line of scouts was placed around the encampment where danger might be expected.

Several days thus passed away, and one day the Red Hat appeared much better, his first question being about the Paleface Killer, Elmo, the outlaw chief.

"He is across the river, his braves killed or prisoners," was the answer.

"The Paleface Killer is a great chief; his heart is good, and his red brother the Red Hat loves him.

"Let the Lone Chief tell him to come back across the Rio Grande and he will give him a hundred of his best young men to aid him make war upon the palefaces."

"I will tell the Paleface Killer."

"The Lone Chief is the brother of the Red Hat, too.

"If he would come to my village, I would make him a great chief of my people.

"Will he come?"

"The Lone Chief must dwell alone—he cannot go to the village of the Red Hat, but he thanks him.

"To-morrow the Red Hat will be able to be moved, and he will go back to his people, the Lone Chief to his lone tepee."

And so it was that the next afternoon the Indians broke camp, carrying their wounded on *travois*, and seated upon his horse, as they filed away, the guide watched them until they had disappeared in the distance, when he muttered:

"A strange people, whose religion it is to kill—who can blame them?"

CHAPTER CLXXII.

WILD WILL'S STORY.

When Wild Will parted with the guide he rode rapidly for a mile or more, then came suddenly to a halt.

"I will do it!"

He uttered the words in a determined way, then rode back on the trail he had been following until he came back to a canyon leading off to the left.

Entering this, he saw that it went only for half a mile back into the hills, and at its end was a steep trail leading over the range.

"That trail is made by deer, and leads to this pool and grass.

"Where deer go, my horse can, so here is the place for you to wait for me, old fellow."

So saying, he staked his horse out with a long line, and shouldering his rifle, set out on foot back along the trail to the range.

He soon passed the spot where the camp had been, and observing a lofty cliff near, he circled around it and mounted to the top, concealing himself among some dwarf pines growing there, for he saw that, from his position, he overlooked the place where they had beaten back the Indians, and not a quarter of a mile from him was the guide seated upon a rock at the edge of the ridge, while his horse stood near.

"That looks strange, his going back to meet those redskins.

"Yet he certainly fired upon them, and he saved our whole outfit from death.

"I'll stay and see what it means.

"Ah! he is rising now, and he is going to mount his horse.

"I guess he has just waited there to give the redskins another fight if they advanced, and allow the command that much more time to get away—"

"No, he is riding over the ridge—the redskins must have retreated.

"As I live, no!

"He is raising his hands as a signal for peace," and Wild Will continued to watch the ridge until he saw the Indians come up and surround the guide.

"Well, that beats all," he muttered, as he beheld the guide dismount, and leave his horse while he went over the ridge.

Wild Will at once retreated along the ridge, made his way swiftly, yet with extreme caution, back to the canyon, and mounting his horse, rode on at a rapid gallop after the soldiers.

The animal was well rested and had a good feed, and went along at a brisk gallop, leaving his hiding-place hardly ten minutes before the Indian scouts sent out passed the canyon and went along the trail a mile or more to stand guard, so Wild Will had had a closer call than he had thought.

Had not the ladies been along the scout would have been in no hurry, for the soldiers could have stood at bay and given their pursuers a very severe lesson; but it would not do to risk a fight when Marcelite Monastery and Mrs. Silvester were along, as they might fall under the fire.

So on he rode at a swinging gallop, and yet it was late in the afternoon before he came in sight of the command, for Colonel Monastery had pushed steadily on, intending to make an early camp for the night.

Seeing the scout coming the soldiers broke forth in a cheer, for the corporal having reported that he had remained behind for some reason, and that he had heard hot firing on the range, all began to feel anxious regarding his safety.

But he came along at a swinging gallop, his face unmoved by excitement, and raising his hat courteously as he passed the ladies, he drew rein only when he reached the colonel, who was riding ahead with two of the scouts.

"Colonel Monastery, I have a report to make to you, sir, and then I would like to drop behind a few miles with a couple of scouts, while you go into camp for a

good rest, as I see that your cattle need it, sir," he said, politely.

"I am glad to see you back again with us, Wild Will," said Colonel Monastery, as he heard the scout's words, and he at once drew his horse back behind the two scouts with whom he had been riding, while he added:

"Halt at the first good camping-place you come to, men."

The scouts rode on at a more rapid pace, and the colonel said:

"Now, Wild Will, you have something to report to me, I am sure?"

"I wish to report to you, sir, that we gave the redskins a good lesson, and drove them back to shelter, and then I sent the corporal on with his men."

"Yes, they joined us about an hour and a half ago, and we were anxious about you, as the corporal reported that you sent him on while you returned, and he heard hot firing on the range they had just left."

"Yes, sir, I went back because I heard firing, and felt sure that the guide intended to still remain and keep the Indians in check."

"Alone?"

"Yes, sir."

"You were right?"

"I was, sir, for he had opened upon them hotly, emptied his rifle and was down to his revolvers when I arrived and the Indians coming on rapidly."

"He is a plucky man, Wild Will."

"He has as much nerve as any man I ever saw, sir."

"But to your story."

"I chipped in with my repeating rifle, and it proved to be a surprise party, for the redskins had evidently thought that the command had gone, leaving perhaps two or three men as a rear guard."

"The guide seemed glad to see me, though surprised, and we loaded our rifles and rattled them off with our revolvers, just to let them think there was a number there, and then we left the range."

"At the camp the guide left me, sir, and I came on a short distance and then decided to return and reconnoitre."

"I left my horse in a canyon, returned to the high point of rocks you remember near the spot where the two trails met and came over the range."

"Yes, the trail we would have come by and the one the guide led us by?"

"Yes, sir."

"I remember the high point."

"I hid up there and saw the guide seated on the side of the range, his horse standing near."

"What was he there for?"

"To still check the Indians I thought, sir, if they again attempted to come on after you and so gain for you more time."

"And all alone, too?"

"Yes, sir."

"Noble fellow."

"While I watched, sir, I saw him rise and look over the range, then mount his horse and riding to the summit raise both of his hands."

"What! they were coming upon him?"

"They were coming, sir, and he did it in token of peace."

"And they fired upon him?" anxiously said the colonel.

"Indeed they did not, sir, fire upon him."

"What then?"

"They were as friendly with him as thieves, and he went over the range and returned with their wounded, taking them to your camp, sir."

"This is remarkable."

"He was evidently in no danger, sir, and was chief medicine with them, that is certain, for he was looking after their wounded."

"And then?"

"I found that I had to get away or lose my scalp, so I left, sir, returned to my horse and rode hard to overtake you, sir."

"And I am glad that you did, Wild Will. But what do you make out of the guide's mysterious friendship with the Indians whom he had fought a while before?"

"And fought hard, sir, for that man throws away no shots."

"It is beyond my comprehension, his behavior."

"He certainly kept them from pursuing you, sir, I am glad to say, for they did not do so, but went quietly into camp, and put out their scouts; but whether they will think better of it and come on, it is hard to say, so I wish to drop back a few miles with a couple of men, take a point where I can see the trail for some distance, thus giving you good time to move on, sir."

"A good idea; but what do you make out of the guide being the foe and friend alike of the Comanches?"

"He said they would not harm him, sir, that he was safe with them unless they knew him to be against them, and so I take it that he has some secret hold upon them, that we do not understand, and he does not care to make known to us."

"Yes, some secret power over them he certainly has," said the colonel, and after a few more words with Wild Will, the latter rode back on the trail, accompanied by a soldier and a scout.

A few miles further on the scouts in advance came upon the very spot for a camp, and which was capable of being well defended as well, and here the halt was made for the night.

Colonel Monastery told Captain Silvester and the others at supper what Wild Will reported about the guide, and they wondered at his mysterious secret power with the Indians that prevented them from putting him to death, while Lieutenant Cole said:

"You may not believe it, Colonel Monastery, but I am sure that that man is crooked, that he lives a double life, and some day you will find out that I am right."

"I shall wait for proof of it before I believe," was Marcelite's quick response.

CHAPTER CLXVIII.

THE MYSTERIOUS GUIDE KNOWN.

The unknown and most mysterious guide who had so strangely figured in this story left the Indians and wended his way to his own lone ranch.

It was in a fertile valley on a mountain top, and from many high points of lookout near his door he could see

for miles and miles around and command every approach to his retreat.

It was a camp, rather than a ranch, with lightly-built cabins, and in the valley were visible very few cattle, and a couple of score of very fine horses.

A group of half-a-dozen men, all Americans save two, who were Mexicans, and a bold and hardy lot of men, arose to greet him as he rode up, one of them saying:

"We were getting anxious about you, chief."

"Well I have had my hands full, Sam; but is there any word for me from the Rio Grande?"

"Yes, sir, your Mexican, who went with Elmo has returned and brings you a letter."

The letter was eagerly seized and read, and the guide said in a cheery way:

"Our time here ends, boys, for we start for the Rio Grande to-night, and then for Fort D——."

"Get your traps all ready, and take the horses; but the cattle we leave to become wild, a game for the Indians, for we must ride rapidly."

That night the guide and his followers left what had been their home for months and pushed rapidly on to the Rio Grande.

The Mexican who had gone with Elmo, the outlaw, from the mountain ranch, led the party to a retreat on the American side of the Rio Grande, and then departed alone.

That night he returned, and not alone, for Elmo, the outlaw, was with him, and besides there were three horsemen and a horsewoman, and the guide gave them a warm welcome, while he said:

"It has been a long and hard task to find you, Colonel Deering, but I am glad that it is over with and you and your party are safe."

"We will start at once for Fort D——, where Colonel Monastery now is."

"And we shall be glad to get there, I assure you, Mr. Frederick, and we owe all to you, as the Mexican, Senor Elmo, has told me," answered the one addressed as Colonel Deering.

Then the guide turned to Elmo, and the two walked apart together, the former saying:

"Well, Elmo, you kept your pledge, as I knew that you would, for I was sure that you had not wholly forgotten the old days of our boyhood, and that the teachings of your good mother would yet govern you."

"I admit that life went rough with you, and accident made you go wrong at first, and you had much to put up with, and turned to a life of outlawry as the only chance, but as I told the general that I had faith in you, and he allowed me to come here to accomplish, with your aid and old friendship for me, I felt I could do so, I have shown that you were true at heart, and you saved me and my men from attack by the Comanches, gave me power among them and have in the end done the right thing by yielding up your prisoners, safe and without ransom or terms, I now give to you the pardon I hold for you, and have held since my coming here, and I sincerely hope that you will from now on lead a different life."

"I will, my good friend, and I owe it to you."

"Now I shall live in Mexico until one day I feel that I must return to the old home—then I will look you up."

"It was noble of you to trust in me, and place yourself in my power to accomplish the release of Colonel Deering and his party."

"But I promised you that the Indians should treat you and your men as my brother, and they did so, and I feel glad that I kept my pledge, though forced to do so in the end by the detention of my outlaw band, and released the prisoners I captured a year ago and have held in Mexico."

"Good-by, my boyhood pard, and success be yours to the end."

The outlaw wrung the hand of the guide, and thus the two parted.

Half an hour after he had reached the Rio Grande and the guide was leading the released prisoners on the trail to Fort D——.

It was near sunset of the next day when the fort was reached, and saving the guide's own escort all rode up to the headquarters of Colonel Monastery, who called out:

"Deering, is it you or your ghost I see, for I had given you up as dead, you and those with you."

"No, Colonel Monastery, I am all right, as is my daughter and my two officers who were captured with me a year ago, and we have been prisoners in the secret camp of Elmo, the outlaw, in Mexico. But our rescue is entirely due to our good friend here——"

"Our guide, William Frederick, I'll wager high on it."

"Your guide? Our rescuer is Chief of Army Scouts, William F. Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, the King of Plainsmen!"

The secret was out.

The strange guide was known as he really was—Buffalo Bill, the Scout.

This announcement created a big sensation among those who knew the scout as Mr. Frederick, and a cheer went up as they crowded around him to shake his hand.

Deering told of his capture long before, and how all had been held for ransom, while, their fate being unknown, Buffalo Bill had volunteered to find out, and General Sherman had allowed him to do so in his own way, which was to seek the haunts of the Mexican outlaw chief, claim with his scout allies to be rancheros, and relying in the fact that the outlaw leader was a boyhood friend of his, to place faith in him and thus learn all the secrets of the band and of the Indian camps as to what had become of Colonel Deering and his party.

This Buffalo Bill had done, but if known as the great army scout he would not have been trusted, so all had sworn to keep his identity hidden, and thus had done so.

"Do you still mistrust Scout Cody, Lieutenant Cole?" asked Marcelite Monastery, determined to give the officer a sly dig.

"I confess now to my error in ever having done so, and I humbly ask pardon, Cody," was the frank reply.

"Willingly granted, Lieutenant Cole; but I had a part to play, and did so," was Buffalo Bill's response.

"And won out in the end, as you always do," added Colonel Monastery.

TO BE CONTINUED.

PRIZE ANECDOTE DEPARTMENT.

Boys, look on page 31 and see the announcement of the new contest. We propose to make this contest the most successful and far-reaching ever conducted. It rests with you to do it, but we know that you can, because the first contest along the same lines has been a tremendous success.

Here are some of the best articles received this week:

A Narrow Shave.

(By George Sylvester, Gloucester, Mass.)

One day in the spring of 1898 my friend and I started out to have a good time. We were walking along the Boston and Maine Railroad, intending to go to our camp in West Gloucester. We both had our guns on our shoulders, and were walking carelessly along when we heard the whistle of a south-bound train, so we went over on the other track. When the north-bound train blew her whistle we did not know what to do. If we stepped over the track the south-bound train would be on us, so I caught hold of my friend and jumped in the river.

As we could not swim, the tide carried us way down the cut. As soon as we could stand on our feet in the water we came ashore. We were in a very bad condition to walk two miles to get home, so we walked to our camp, which was about a half a mile away. We got there and stayed over night, and the news had spread around in Gloucester that two boys were knocked into the river and drowned by the north-bound express.

I tell you, it was a surprise to the people when they saw us enter the city that morning. Ever since the fellows have given us the nickname of narrow.

A Fearful Night.

(By Charles Spreen, Lampasas, Texas.)

I have been reading Street & Smith's weeklies, and like them all, but my favorite is the Buffalo Bill stories. I noticed your Anecdote Prize Contest and thought I would tell you of an adventure I had last winter. A few friends and myself decided we would spend Christmas on the Colorado River, as it is a fine place for fish, deer, duck, geese, turkey and other wild game.

We fixed the day, and started Monday morning at 4 o'clock and got there the same day and pitched tents. The next morning we decided to go on a big hunting trip. Clyde Wolf, my chum, and I started in one direction, while the other boys started in another direction. We went down the river and got a few ducks, and then decided to hunt deer. As the snow was about two inches deep, we could easily track deer. We saw the tracks of one and followed it several miles, but at last gave up the search, as it was growing late, and thought best to go back to the camp. We at once set out, and hunted several hours, but could not find it. We then came to the conclusion that we were lost. We were in the dense cedar brakes and night came on us fast, but still we went on. We were walking along, when suddenly in front of us we saw two large balls of fire. I told Clyde the best we could do was for us both to shoot at the same time to be sure of killing what we thought to be a Mexican lion. We shot between his eyes, but only wounded him, which made him very vicious. I again shot him and almost killed him, but we had to fight him in a fierce hand-to-hand conflict. We were victorious after five minutes' hard fighting, but we had numerous ugly scratches from his claws.

As soon as we had our enemy killed, we lit a match, and it proved to be a big panther. We then proceeded on again and were walking leisurely along when we thought we heard something growl. We dropped our guns and started on a run, and then climbed up a tree. We were up in the tree a little while when we heard some wolves coming. They came under

the tree and stayed till morning when the other boys came and shot them. The boys had heard our cries and they came to our rescue in a hurry as they thought we were being killed by some wild animals. We were mighty glad to get out of the trees and go back to camp, as the night had been exceedingly cold, and we were almost frozen. It was daylight now, and we recovered our guns, and hunted back to the camp. We shot a big deer and took it to camp and skinned it. It was unanimously decided by all to pull out for home. We went the next day, and that was our last hunting trip on the Colorado River.

Through Thin Ice.

(By Patrick Noon, Toledo, Ohio.)

It was a cold, brisk evening in the winter of 1898 that my adventure took place. I had been visiting a friend who resides in the upper end of the city. The ice was quite thick on the river, and I decided to skate down.

I was about half way home when I skated on to a spot where the ice had been cut, and where thin ice had formed. The space was about fifteen feet square. There was a danger sign at the spot, but in the darkness I did not notice it. I was going at good speed, and was nearly across before I broke through.

I succeeded in reaching the solid ice, but I was so fatigued that I could not climb upon it. My hands were torn and bleeding from coming in contact with the thin ice, which I had been forced to break in my struggles to reach the thick ice. I tried several times to get out of the water, but my efforts were in vain. I finally gave up the attempt, as I grew more exhausted with every effort, and I wished to save my strength as long as possible.

It seemed hours since I had fallen into the water, though it was probably not more than ten minutes. I shouted for help until I was hoarse. Then, just as my strength seemed to be gone, I heard a party of skaters coming up the river, directly toward the place where I was clinging to the ice.

"Help! help!" I shouted.

"What's that?" cried one of the approaching skaters, increasing his speed.

"Look out," I said, "or you'll go in."

After explaining the situation to them, they tried to pull me on to the solid ice. They found it no easy task, but by dint of great care and perseverance they at last succeeded.

There were two friends of mine in the party, and they assisted me home. Fortunately, the car line was near, and as it ran directly past my home, I experienced no additional ill effects from being exposed to the cold air. I was, however, confined to the house for a week as the result of my adventure, and you may be sure that I do not wish for a repetition of it.

Under the Ice.

(By Tom A. Graham, Chicago, Ill.)

One winter day a crowd of boys and myself were skating on Lake Michigan when suddenly the ice gave way under us, and three boys and myself were in the cold, icy water.

I went down about ten or fifteen feet and then came to the surface, only to find the ice holding me under the water, but,

being an expert swimmer and long-winded I swam to where I saw one of my companion's legs. I then saw an opening in the ice where he was being pulled out. I tried to swim to where it was, but the ice held me.

Soon I heard chopping above me and the ice broke and I was pulled by the arm out of the water.

Then I was rolled along the ice until I felt able to walk. I walked to the shore where I found a nice fire. Beside the fire was the drowned body of Toy Davies, one of my friends; the other two, Edwin Wessling and John Fergus, were rescued, but were nearly frozen.

I went home and put on warm clothes. I have never been skating on that lake since, as I was warned not to.

A Struggle in Quicksand.

(By George B. Hefler, Brockton, Mass.)

My brother and I are very fond of fishing, and each holiday finds us near some river or lake indulging in our favorite sport. On one of these trips we had rather an unpleasant experience which came near proving serious. It was on a hot day in July. We started out with our fishing rods over our shoulders and some potatoes in a bag which we intended to cook with our fish.

After arriving at the river we separated, my brother going in one direction and I going in another.

I had been fishing for half an hour with good success when I was startled by hearing my brother scream:

"Quick! George! Help, I'm sinking!"

"Where are you, Harry!" I yelled, dropping my fishing pole and running in the direction from which his voice came.

"Here! here, under the big oak; hurry!"

I ran to him and was terrified to see him up to his waist in quicksand. For a minute I was overcome with fright, then I came to my senses, and upon looking around I was fortunate enough to see a long pole, which I ran to get.

When I returned he was up to his armpits and still sinking. I gave him one end of the pole and tried to pull him out. At first I could not move him, but, after vigorous pulling I saw that he was nearing the bank. After a few more minutes of hard work, I had him on the bank, safe again. He had been fishing when his line caught in a tree. Not knowing about the quicksand there, he had started out to unfasten it when he fell into the bog. He washed the mud off his clothes and then we started for home. When we got there he changed his clothes, and in an hour he was out playing as lively as ever.

A Deer Hunt.

(By Alfred Rivers, Herkimer, N. Y.)

When the deer-hunting season opened this year, I went to a gun store and bought a repeating rifle. I intended to kill at least two deer this season or die trying, so I started out the next morning about four o'clock, taking my dog, Bruno, along. It took me about two hours to reach the woods; I had not got my breath yet when Bruno commenced acting in a strange manner, growling and showing his teeth. I stepped forward to see what was the matter. Judge my surprise when I saw two deer start from among the trees and run away with Bruno in full chase. While I had not even thought of shooting at them. Picking up my gun, which I had dropped in the excitement of the moment I started in pursuit. I had run about half a mile when I came to a clearing. There, in the middle of the field were the deer quietly feeding, apparently unmindful of approaching danger. Here was the opportunity which I had longed for, so taking steady aim, I fired. One of the deer fell, bleeding, to the ground, while the other ran away. I ran to the fallen deer, which was trying to rise. Raising my gun, I fired, straight at the animal's head. After a few struggles, it rolled over and expired. I stepped up close to the animal, when, lo! and behold, I had shot one of Farmer Hill's calves, which I had mistaken in the dusk for a deer.

Well, I started back home. Father said, "Did you see a deer?"

I said, "No," which was the truth. I went over to see Hill,

who, after a good deal of haggling, agreed to settle for ten dollars, and not tell anybody about it, but, somehow, it leaked out and now everybody calls me "Deerslayer."

Capsized by the Swell.

(By Joseph Strockbine, Philadelphia, Pa.)

One day as I passed a store I saw some Buffalo Bill stories in the window. I thought I would buy one, and I read it and found it very interesting and when I got through with it I saw in the back of the book some exciting adventures of some boys. Seeing the offers for the boys who could write the most interesting and exciting adventures about themselves, I thought I would tell you an adventure about myself near Trenton. I will call it "My Experience in the Water."

One day, when I got my dinner I came down to the bank of the Delaware River, where there were some children playing. There was a rowboat there, which the children were playing in. I said to them:

"Let's play steamboats."

They all said, "All right."

We then voted who should be the rower, and I was chosen to be the one to steer. I put an oar out of the lock of the boat and it worked all right. We had places to stop at and let the children on and off. We rowed all around the banks, and about half-past three o'clock I looked up the river and saw the City of Trenton coming. I told all the children to get out of our boat. I stayed in it, and went out to catch the swells from the large steamboat. It was low tide, and you had to row a great deal before you could get to the channel. Before I could get to the channel the waves started to come. The first ones were not so large, and they started to wash me ashore. When the large waves came I was in about two foot of water, and one of the large waves tipped the boat way over, and the next upset her, and I went into the water with all my clothes on. I had to push the boat ashore, and quickly got the water out of her and went home and stole in the house and got my other clothes on as quick as I could so that my father would not know it. The boys did not tell, and up till now no one else has known of it.

Swimming the Charles River.

(By Thomas O'Neill, East Lexington, Mass.)

One day in July in the year 1895 I was visiting my cousin in Cambridge, Mass. The Charles River runs through the park referred to. There were a lot of boys playing ball in the park on the side of the river. One of them suggested a swim, and all agreed to go. I went with them. We were daring each other to swim across, when one boy started, and about a dozen of us followed. We got across in safety, and started to come back. They started with the current, and I started against it. I had always swam in fresh water, and knew nothing about the current of a river. I got about to the middle when I took a cramp in my arms, and went under. I was about to go under the third time when three of the boys who heard my cries for help reached me and caught me by the hair, and saved me from death.

A Sharp Bargain.

(By Edwin Egner, South Elgin, Ill.)

A shrewd old Windom County Yankee went into a grocery store at Norwich and asked the price of herrings.

"Three cents apiece," answered the grocer.

"Ah," said Smarty, briskly, "I'll take one," and the grocer rolled him up his herring. As he took the parcel a new thought struck him.

"Keep beer?" he shouted, explosively.

"Yes," said the grocer, as soon as he recovered from the shock of his customer's abruptness.

"How much a glass?"

"Three cents."

"Oh, ah," said the customer, thoughtfully, and then with great rapidity:

"Well, I won't take the herring, I'll take the beer; herrings three cents, beer's three cents. Give me the beer. There's the herring," and he passed over the herring, drank the beer, and started to go.

"See here," interrupted the grocer, "you haven't paid for the beer."

"Paid for it. Of course I haven't. I gave you the herring for it. Both the same price, you said."

"Y-e-s—I know," said the grocer, who was getting confused, "but you didn't pay for the herring."

"Pay for it!" thundered Smarty. "Of course I didn't. Why should I? I didn't take it, did I?"

And then the grocer said meekly:

"Oh, well, I presume it's all right—only I don't—but of course you're correct—only, if you'll just as leave, I wish you'd trade somewhere else."

The customer retired, and the grocer fell into a brown study from which he at length emerged with the remark:

"Well, that's a darned smart feller, anyhow."

A Midnight Experience.

(By Van Dyke Charlier, New York City.)

About two and a half years ago, during the political feud in Kentucky, I was there visiting my elder brother. I had just been to a mass meeting of the Republicans, and was returning home greatly excited over the enthusiastic speeches I had been listening to for the last three hours. My road lay through a small wood, and while riding along I continually turned over in my mind the many and dreadful deeds which had been perpetrated during the last few months, and so managed to work myself up to such a pitch that every unusual shadow or noise startled me.

When in this state of mind my horse, which up to this time had been carrying me along at an easy canter, came into a moonlit space and stopped so abruptly as to nearly unseat me. I looked up to discover the cause, and beheld an apparition in front of me uttering the most blood curdling sound I have ever heard. My horse actually crouched in terror beneath me,

and my hair seemed to rise on end. However, calming myself by a great effort, I dismounted, and slipping the bridle over my left arm I drew a small revolver, which I always carried, and led my trembling horse forward.

Can you imagine my surprise when, on approaching this terrible object I discovered that it was a white horse which had been shot in the back, and whose hindquarters were paralyzed. He was sitting on his haunches uttering horrible groans. Having put the poor animal out of his misery I again mounted my horse and soon reached home. Now, after it was all over the reaction set in and it was several days before I recovered from the effects of my midnight experience.

My Experience with a Mad Dog.

(By Elmer G. Peacher, Birmingham, Ala.)

I was standing in the northern part of town watching a crowd of small children playing. I had just missed a car so had to wait about thirty minutes.

All of a sudden I caught the glimpse of a large Newfoundland dog coming at a swinging gait down the avenue. The foam was coming out of his mouth, and I saw in an instant that he was mad. When he saw the children he went for them. They scattered in every direction, and the dog started after a boy of about eight years.

The boy, panic-stricken, started toward me as hard as he could tear, and fairly yelled:

"Oh, don't let him get me, please."

I drew my revolver in an instant and took quick aim and fired. I saw I had missed. He sprang at me. I snatched the kid and dodged. As he sprang past me I fired between his ribs. It brought him down, but I put the other three shots in him to make sure.

The boy's father was rich, and my last birthday I received a wheel for saving the boy from the brute.

BOYHOODS OF FAMOUS MEN.

This department contains each week the story of the early career of some celebrated American. Watch for these stories and read them, boys. They are of the most fascinating interest.

Those already published are: No. 1—Buffalo Bill; No. 2—Kit Carson; No. 3—Texas Jack; No. 4—Col. Daniel Boone; Nos. 5 and 6—David Crockett; No. 7—General Sam Houston; Nos. 8 and 9—Lewis Wetzel; Nos. 10 and 11—Capt. John Smith; No. 12—Wild Bill; No. 13—Dr. Frank Powell, the Surgeon Scout; No. 14—Buckskin Sam.

No. 15—"Old Grizzly" Adams.

(SENECA ADAMS.)

By A PARD OF THE PLAINS.

Seneca Adams he was called, on account of being born near Seneca Lake, where his earlier years were spent hunting, fishing and paddling in an Indian canoe over the waters, whether they were calm or lashed to fury by a storm.

As a boy, young Adams loved nature, and he was perfectly happy if alone in the then vast forests of New York State, camping on the lake shore, or roving the hills; while with his school companions he was ever restless and anxious to get away to himself.

Long years after, when in his lone cabin in the wilds of the Rocky Mountains, Adams was wont to think of his boyhood home upon Seneca Lake, and of the graves in the little churchyard where lay the mother, father and kindred he had loved.

As a boy, he was a natural animal tamer, possessing over all dumb beasts a wonderful power, a sort of hypnotic spell.

His pony, his dog, the cattle and even the fowls on the farm were wont to follow him as they did no one else.

His aim in life was to get out into the wild lands of the far West and collect savage beasts for a menagerie which he intended should make his fortune.

When not yet seventeen he had left his home and made the start to build his fortune, going by wagon train, for those were not the days of many railroads across the States toward Borderland.

To the surprise of all at home, he had one day strapped his outfit upon his pack-horse, saddled his riding horse, called hi

dog and ridden away on his fortune hunt with a wave of his hat to his loved ones, for he dared not trust himself to say good-by.

His wild life at home had well gifted him for the work, and he was engaged as hunter for the wagon-train at a small salary, but to him a generous one.

It was a long, hard trail of months across the country; but he performed his part well, always keeping the train people well supplied with game that frequented the country through which they passed.

Young Adams' first fight with Indians, his first death-blow, was when the train got into the redskin country, and out on his hunt one day, he came upon a deadly conflict.

One Indian stood at bay against three, and caring nothing for the merits of the case, it was his nature to help the weak against the strong.

Seeing that the one he sought to aid would be killed, he rushed to his aid, dropping one with his rifle, another with his pistol and attacking the third with knife in hand.

He had great strength for his years, wonderful endurance, was of wiry build, and utterly fearless.

The fight lasted but a moment, and young Adams was the victor, while the chief whom he had rescued dropped to the ground from weakness, and astounded that a white hunter had aided him.

"Well, old Fuss-and-Feathers, I have helped you out of a little scrape, because I always help the under dog in the fight," said young Adams, in his quaint way, for he had an odd way of speaking.

The chief was breathing hard, could understand a little English, and mastered enough to know that the youth was his friend, and said:

"Young paleface chief heap good—red brother like him heap—much hurt bad."

"Yes, and your blood is running out fast—I'll doctor you, for I can do it."

He quickly set to work to dress the wounds, while he asked: "What set them on to you?"

"Me Pawnee—love Sioux girl—she love me, maybe.

"Me try to steal her. Sioux come and have hard fight."

"Yes, red or white, girls cause trouble; but I'll take you to your village on my horse."

"Good white brother—heap good," said the chief, and bringing his horse, young Adams helped the Indian into the saddle and took him to his village, where the chief loudly sang his praises, and all made him welcome.

When the wagon train reached the Rocky Mountains young Grizzly said that he would strike out for himself and alone.

This he did, and after a long search happened upon the very spot where he wished to build his cabin.

His one aim was to get into a country where there were grizzly bears, cinnamons, mountain lions, panthers, wildcats, wolves, and any other savage animals he could find, for his object was to collect his "menagerie" and tame his pets to obey him.

He built his cabin well, of the stoutest logs, determined to make a fort of it, in case he was attacked by Indians.

He had his three horses, for he had made some purchases at a fort on the way, that caused him to get a second pack-horse, and he had secured a large quantity of supplies, for camps were few and far between then in that country.

His horses were also given a stout shelter next to his own, and his dog, which he had named Parson, on account of his very serious looks, was to share the quarters with him.

Not a redskin had Adams seen in the two months that he was building his cabins, and as winter was approaching he decided that he would have to go to the nearest fort, a hundred miles distant, to get more supplies and also set to work to put up smoked game for use when the heavy snows would keep him housed.

He had already killed a number of bears and other animals, and prepared their skins for robes, and later he hoped to catch all the wild beasts he wanted, when he set to work to do so.

Having completed his cabins, hidden away in a thick pine grove among the cliffs, with a spring bubbling up under one corner of his home, he locked his doors, mounted his horse, called to his dog and with his pack-horses following, started on his long trail to the fort.

Though not yet of age, his face was covered by a long growth of beard, his hair had grown so long it fell below his shoulders, and in his fur and buckskin dress, foxskin cap and moccasins he presented a very strange appearance.

So the officers and men thought as he rode into the post, his horses and dogs following at his heels.

"Colonel, I ran upon a band of redskins on the march this way, traveling only by night, and all of 500 strong, for I crept in and took their count.

"They intend to surprise you, I can swear, and they'll get here about dawn to-morrow," said young Adams, going at once to headquarters and reporting.

"My scouts have made no such report to me," said the officer.

"I don't care a continental if they hain't—I tells you the truth, and it don't seem to me that you have any too many sogers here to take chances."

"Who are you?"

"Seneca Adams, born and raised in Seneca Lake, New York, now a hunter in the Rockies for big and little game and redskins if they are looking for me."

"Are you alone?"

"Yes, only me, my horses and my dog, Parson."

"How far is your camp from here?"

"A hundred miles by the trail I come, and I am after my winter supplies."

"Tell me all you know about those Indians you saw."

Adams did so, and the commandant sent for his officers, and hardly any of them believed the story, while all the fort scouts were away to the southward.

"I hain't got nothing to make, and you've got lives to lose if you don't believe me.

"I told you what I saw, colonel, and I wasn't born in the woods to be scared by a owl. But as you don't fix for those fellows, I'll get what I needs to buy and light out, for I won't be caught here," hotly said Adams.

"Stay, my man, for I shall prepare against attack. But there have come to us here white renegades with stories just to put us off our guard at some place to be attacked, and you are totally unknown."

"I guess I hain't anxious to get better acquainted—good-by, colonel," and Adams was leaving when the colonel called him aside and had a long talk with him.

The result was that the fort was put under arms and all made ready for the attack, so Adams remained to "lend my rifle for the fight," as he said.

It was just dawn when, without any other warning of their presence near, 500 Indians rushed upon the fort.

But they were the ones surprised, for they were fairly mowed down by scores and soon were beaten off at every

point, while young Adams had been the bravest of the brave, throwing no shot away, and gaining the name of having killed twenty Indians, for he wounded none, as his aim was deadly.

Invited to remain at the fort, Seneca Adams remained a few days, and when he went to make his purchases he found that no money would be taken from him upon any account, but he was forced to accept supplies of all kinds, blankets, the latest make of weapons, a box of medicines enough of everything to keep a family through the long winter.

When he took his departure he was given a rousing cheer, and though he knew that he was going to a life of utter loneliness, perhaps to his death, it did not affect his spirits in the least.

He made the distance by easy stages, taking four days, as his pack-horses were heavily laden, and all the way he carried a parrot in a cage, which the fort sutler had given him, and a Great Dane puppy, the colonel gave him, in his arms.

"Now I'm fixed for keeps," he said to himself after he had gotten his cabin arranged to suit him, and he set to work to pack the loft of his stable with hay he had cured and to cut wood and pile it up around the cabin to cheer him with a blazing fire on the long winter nights.

Hardly had he gotten all in readiness when a terrible blizzard came and the winter had begun for the young hermit.

It was young Adam's desire to capture cubs alive and start his menagerie when the spring came. But meanwhile he had the great Dane pup to train, the parrot to talk to, and his horses and household to look after.

He hunted and fished on pleasant days, his dog, Parson, always his companion, and with his supplies from the fort he lived well.

Thus the winter passed away, and Adams' first capture for his menagerie was a grizzly bear cub.

It fought and clawed him, growled and bit him, but he held on, threw it into a bag and ran for his cabin, Parsons leading for the old she bear was coming along with a roar.

He just got in and tossing the cub upon the floor, seized his rifle and sprang to the door when the grizzly was there and gave the door a blow with her paws that made the cabin shiver.

But before she could chew the door in splinters, Adams opened with his rifle through a lookout, and several well-aimed shots finished the grizzly.

Opening the door, the hunter closed and barred it quickly, for the old he grizzly was coming with a rush.

"I've got to make a orphan of you, cubby," said the hunter, and he opened on the monster grizzly, and had the satisfaction of killing him, too.

"Two splendid hides and a fine cub for my menagerie," he muttered. But it was a long time before the cub took kindly to his master, and he delighted in knocking over the Dane pup, and even gave Parson a whack, while he was so strong that Adams called him Samson.

• But Adams soon had him well trained to follow him like a dog, and the strange purchases he had made on his way out were massive collars, chains and padlocks.

He also built a high, strong stockade pen, and his searches for cubs were rewarded, as he got a pair of mountain lions a week old, and came near being killed by the old ones.

He captured a wildcat kitten, a pair of wolf cubs, a young panther, and an eagle, so that he began to feel that his menagerie was in sight.

He chained them all in the stockade, and when they began

to quarrel the parrot remained quiet, while Parson and the Dane, Colonel, howled dismally.

Again Adams started for the fort after supplies; but he was clawed and bitten up until his face was all scars.

But he did not mind it, got his supplies and returned home to find his chained-up menagerie in the stockade half starved, while wild animals of all kinds had gathered there to join in the row.

One of Adams' most clever feats was in throwing the lasso, and it was something he never went without.

Determined to catch alive a black bear that was at the cabin as he returned, he gave one end of the lasso a throw intending to quickly take a half hitch around a tree.

He caught the bear all right, but with an angry snort it made a lightning-like break for freedom, and entangled in the other end the hunter was yanked along down the mountain side at terrible speed.

"Durned if I hain't made a mistake to hitch on to this critter," shouted the bear catcher, as with mighty leaps he followed, unable to free himself, or stop, while the bear in fright at his pursuit ran the faster, Parson and Colonel following with their tails between their legs.

"That durned bar won't stop in a hundred miles—catch him, Parson! take hold of him, Colonel!" he yelled.

But the dogs pretended not to hear, and drawing his revolvers Adams opened fire as he sailed along and after a few shots killed the bear.

When he had secured the skin and returned to his cabin, he was surprised to find two men there, just dismounting from their horses.

He recognized them as tough characters he had seen at the fort, and been warned against as they had told the sutler that they were sure that Adams had found gold in the mountains and did not wish it known.

"Pard, we has come ter board with yer, while we prospects a little for gold," said one.

"I have all ther boarders I wants, so you just light out from here, for I know your game," said Adams.

"An' ef that's yours we'll meet yer," and the speaker drew a revolver, while the other slipped out of his saddle to use his rifle.

But Seneca Adams was too quick for them and killed both of them just as they were about to fire.

"Well, they start my graveyard," grimly said the hunter, and I may add that from beating off an attack by outlaws on another occasion, and several bands of Indians that trailed him to his cabin, the graves increased in his burying ground by a score.

Several times did Adams warn the fort of Indian attacks, and on one occasion when a retreating band of Indians, with several white prisoners, camped in the valley, near his cabin, not knowing he was there, he got his "menagerie," now well trained, with chains rattling, the beasts roaring, the dogs barking, and parrot shrieking, while he blew a horn and fired his revolvers, charged through the hostile camp and sent them flying in terror for their lives.

He lost several of the members of his menagerie, but he rescued the prisoners and took them to the fort in safety.

As the years passed on he kept threatening to spring his animals upon the people, but put it off and kept on adding to his queer lot.

He had become known as "Grizzly Adams," and a wonderful tamer of wild beasts.

His monster grizzly, Samson, he had trained as a saddle horse, and rode him anywhere, once riding him into a mining camp, and stampeding everyone who saw him. After long years, and having become famous, Grizzly Adams took his best-trained animals, set the others loose, and started for the East.

He was quickly engaged with his animal outfit by P. T. Barnum, and gave exhibitions, but before he could again visit the scenes of his boyhood at Seneca Lake, he was taken ill and died in Connecticut, one of the most remarkable characters that was ever known as a Border Hero.

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